

Jane Austen Society

**COLLECTED REPORTS
1976–1985**

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1976-1985

**Collected Reports
of the Jane Austen Society
1976-1985**

The Jane Austen Society

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have now been corrected

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THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1976



The Revd. James Austen 1765 - 1819

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is 50p.
and a single payment of £10 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques, etc. should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1976

Membership

There were 131 new members during the year, of whom 23 became Life Members, as did eight old members. There are now 1,558 individual members, as well as 43 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the 50p Annual Subscription, and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday, 17th July, when 500 members and their guests were present. In the absence of Lord David Cecil, Sir Hugh Smiley presided.

The minutes of the last Annual Meeting were taken as read.

The Chairman and Hon. Secretary presented the Report for 1975. This was seconded by Mrs Jean Freeman, and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts for 1975. This was seconded by Mr C. Y. Carstairs, and carried.

Mr. Henry Burke proposed that Lord David Cecil be re-elected President, Mr John Gore Vice-President and Sir Hugh Smiley Chairman. This was seconded by Mrs. Banyard, and carried.

The Chairman proposed that the Committee be re-elected en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by Dr Tony Tanner, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, on "In between—Anne Elliott marries a sailor and Charlotte Heywood goes to the seaside".

A vote of thanks was proposed by Lady Coulson, seconded by Lady Stirling, and carried.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Edward Knight for once more lending Chawton House.

Annual General Meeting 1977

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday, 16th July. The speaker will be Dr Juliet McMaster, professor of English at the University of Alberta, Canada.

Dr McMaster has published two articles—1, 'The continuity of Jane Austen's novels', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 10 (1970), 723-739. 2, 'Surface and subsurface in Jane Austen's novels', *Ariel* 5 (2) (1974), 5-24.

Dr McMaster has edited the papers read at the Bicentenary Conference at the University of Alberta, published by Macmillan under the title of *Jane Austen's Achievement*.

Jane Austen's Letters

The Oxford University Press have told us that they will not reprint Dr R. W. Chapman's complete edition of Jane Austen's Letters. The Society will gladly buy any new or good second-hand copies, if members would kindly look out for them.

New Exhibits at Jane Austen's House

Mrs Rodney Lefroy has lent the following, which the late Mr Lefroy lent to the Bicentenary Exhibition:

A water colour of the Rev. James Austen, Jane Austen's eldest brother. This is reproduced on the cover of this Report.

A copy in Jane Austen's handwriting of an obituary notice of her friend, Mrs. I. P. G. Lefroy, from The Sun, of 21st December, 1804.

"Mentoria or the Young Ladies Instructor", inscribed by Jane Austen, a gift to her niece Jane Anna Elizabeth Austen, who married the Rev. Benjamin Lefroy.

"Elegant extracts . . .", inscribed by Jane Austen and also a gift to Anna Lefroy.

The Board of Admiralty have placed on permanent loan the Burmese Temple bell, which was presented to Rear-Admiral Charles Austen, Jane Austen's youngest brother, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Force at the storming of Rangoon on 14th April, 1852.

The bell was left by Charles Austen at Trincomalee, where it remained until 1958, and was moved from there, first to Aden, then to Bahrain, and finally to Portsmouth.

We are indebted to Admiral Sir Edward Ashmore, First Sea Lord, for his help in arranging this loan.

Jane Austen's Sampler

Jane Austen's Sampler is now owned by Mrs Molly Proctor, who was given it by Mrs. I. Thompson of Rochester, whose grandfather, Mr Frederick Nicholls of Whitstable was a grandson of a cousin of Jane Austen.

It has been seen at the textile department at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who see no reason to doubt its authenticity. It measures 10in. by 11½in., and is worked in dark green and purple silk, with a little white or cream. The date is 1787. It is thought that the ABC after the Psalm, which are worked in coarser silks, is the work of someone else.



Jane Austen's Sampler.

Collected Reports 1966-75

This second volume of Collected Reports is in preparation. The price will be not less than £10. The Society will have 100 copies which they will be able to sell at £7.50. Private members may apply for these, which will be issued in order of application.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house

Geo. Austin
Sudney Terrace
1801 EXCURSIONS

FROM

BATH.

BY THE

Rev^d. Richard Warner.

"Ea sub oculis posita negligimus; proximorum incuriosi, longinqua
"scdamur."

PLIN.

"Abroad, to see wonders, the traveller goes,
"And neglects the fine things *that* lie under his nose."

ANONYM.



BATH, PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL;

AND SOLD BY

G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATER-NOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1801.

Title page of *Excursions from Bath*

for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, 138 Cheviot Gardens, NW2.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of Jane Austen in Bath, by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Selborne Bookshop, Alton, Hampshire.

Price: 40p (post free).

Alberta Hirshheimer Burke (1906-1975)

On 3rd May 1948, Lot 266 in a sale at Sotheby's included a lock of Jane Austen's hair; the buyer of this lot was Mrs Henry G. Burke of Baltimore, U.S.A. At the Jane Austen Society's meeting on 23rd July 1949, Mr. T. Edward Carpenter's lament over the departure of Jane Austen relics from England led Mrs Burke to make a dramatic presentation of the lock of hair to Jane Austen's House.

Mr and Mrs Burke were among the earliest members of the Jane Austen Society, but, apart from this incident, the extent of Mrs. Burke's passion for Jane Austen was not generally known until after her death in May 1975. Born Alberta Hirshheimer, a native of Wisconsin, she graduated from Goucher College, Baltimore, in 1928 with a bachelor's degree in English, and subsequently received a master's degree, also in English, from the University of Wisconsin. After her marriage in 1930 to Mr. Henry G. Burke (who survives her), she devoted herself to forming one of the finest known privately owned collections of Jane Austen material (which in March 1975 I was greatly privileged to examine in the Burkes' 13th floor Baltimore apartment overlooking Johns Hopkins University). Mrs. Burke herself most treasured the manuscript material in her collection (now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York); she owned eight autograph letters of Jane Austen (Nos. 39, 78.1, 89, 96, 111, 122.1, 123 and 145 in Dr Chapman's edition), a leaf from the novelist's memorandum book (her accounts for the year 1807), Cassandra Austen's note of the dates of composition of her sister's novels, and two letters of Cassandra on Jane Austen's death (to Fanny Knight and to Anne Sharp). The remainder of the collection has been bequeathed to Goucher College, Baltimore (comprising more than 1,000 books by and about Jane Austen, albums of press cuttings, annotated copies of the Keynes and Chapman bibliographies, together with a very large collection of background material—notably a superb array of colour-plate books: Reptons, Pyne's *Royal residences*, Ackermann's *Repository*, the *Microcosm of London*, &c), apart from a specially fine copy of Heideloff's *Gallery of fashion* which has gone to the

Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and a book of particular association interest which Mr Burke in 1976 generously presented to Jane Austen's House, Chawton, in memory of his wife: Richard Warner's *Excursions from Bath* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1801), which has the signature of Rev. George Austen (on the titlepage—see illustration) and Jane Austen's own signature, dated Southampton 1807 (the book, once in the collection of Dr. R. W. Chapman, contains also an autograph of William Beckford).

Mrs. Burke owned first editions of all Jane Austen's novels (some in the original paper boards as published); she had also four first American editions, of which *Emma* (Philadelphia 1816) is one of only three copies known (it once belonged to Siegfried Sassoon), the others being *Elizabeth Bennet* (as *Pride and Prejudice* was first known in the U.S.A.) 1832, *Persuasion* 1832 and *Northanger Abbey* 1833, all published in Philadelphia. The collection includes, too, very many later editions of the novels, dramatisations and adaptations, a large number of modern translations, and a full representation of biographical and critical studies.

Mrs. Burke at no time felt impelled to publish on Jane Austen, but devoted herself rather to a more selfless service to scholarship: the formation of a collection of material on which others may work. The *Annotated bibliography of Jane Austen studies 1952-1972*, by Barry Roth and Joel Weinsheimer (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1973) for example, owes its exhaustiveness to the information which she generously provided, and my own work on the revision of Sir Geoffrey Keynes' bibliography of Jane Austen has profited immeasurably from Mrs Burke's enthusiastic interest (shown in frequent correspondence since our first contact in 1967, in generous gifts and in memorable hospitality in Baltimore so shortly before her death).

David Gilson

NOTE. Mrs Burke bequeathed to the Jane Austen Society the sum of \$1,000; Mr Burke has also recently presented to Jane Austen's House a copy of the score of the setting to music of words from Jane Austen's three prayers, commissioned by him from the composer Robert Hall Lewis in memory of his wife and also in commemoration of the bicentenary of Jane Austen's birth.

Jane Austen and Sir Egerton Brydges

Jane Austen's close friend Mrs Anne Lefroy (1749–1804, wife of Rev. Isaac Lefroy, 1745–1806, Rector of Ashe). in whose memory the novelist composed her only extant attempt at serious verse, was the sister of Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges (1762–1837), 'voluminous and almost forgotten novelist, poet, essayist, bibliographer, antiquary, and genealogist' (D. J. Greene, 'Jane Austen and the peerage', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 68 (1953), 1020), and it is to Sir Egerton Brydges that we owe one of the earliest published comments on Jane Austen, which appears in his *Autobiography* (2 vols., London 1834), Vol. 2, p. 41: 'I remember Jane Austen, the novelist, a little child: she was very intimate with Mrs Lefroy, and much encouraged by her. Her mother was a Miss Leigh, whose paternal grandmother was a sister of the first Duke of Chandos. Mr. Austen was of a Kentish family, of which several branches have been settled in the Weald, and some are still remaining there. When I knew Jane Austen I never suspected that she was an authoress: but my eyes told me that she was fair and handsome, slight and elegant, but with cheeks a little too full. The last time I think that I saw her was at Ramsgate in 1803: perhaps she was then about twenty-seven years old. Even then I did not know that she was addicted to literary composition'.

Brydges' mention of Jane Austen's ancestry reflects his own genealogical preoccupations, and especially the prolonged litigation over his brother's, and later his own, claim to the extinct Chandos peerage (although this claim was finally dismissed by the House of Lords in 1803, Brydges after his brother's death styled himself Baron Chandos of Sudeley; his sole genuine title, that of baronet, was bestowed upon him only in 1814). Egerton Brydges was born at Wootton Court in Kent; in 1786, after his marriage to Elizabeth Byrche, niece of Thomas Barrett of Lee Priory (Ickham, near Canterbury), in order to be near his sister, he rented for a time the parsonage at Deane from Rev. George Austen, and his first acquaintance with Jane Austen must date from this period. In 1791 he bought Denton Court, an Elizabethan mansion adjoining his birthplace, Wootton; in 1810 he moved to Lee Priory, which his eldest son Thomas Barrett Brydges had inherited on the death in 1803 of his mother's uncle Thomas Barrett. Lee Priory was a Jacobean house remodelled in the Gothick taste by James Wyatt for Thomas Barrett between 1782 and 1790; the house was enlarged in Victorian Gothic style by Sir Gilbert Scott in the 1860s, and completely demolished in 1954, but the fabric of one small room was saved and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (see illustration), a small fan-vaulted closet known as the Strawberry Room (strawberries appear as ornaments in the vaulting, but it also has strong affinities with Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill: Walpole



Strawberry Room from Lee Priory
Victoria and Albert Museum

in fact, in a letter to Mary Berry, 28 September 1794, described Lee Priory as 'a child of Strawberry prettier than the parent').

No mention of Lee Priory occurs in Jane Austen's letters, but it is conceivable that, through her connection with Brydges, she may have seen it when visiting Kent; it is tempting to consider the house as at least a partial prototype of Northanger Abbey (Brydges' son inherited Lee Priory in the year when the first version of that novel was finished and sold to Crosby). By coincidence, Jane Austen's only extensive known reference to Egerton Brydges occurs in a letter to Cassandra, 25 November 1798 (No. 12 in Dr Chapman's edition), written at the time when she was composing *Northanger Abbey*. The family had been reading Brydges' novel *Arthur Fitz-Albini*, first published in 1798, and Jane Austen's comments are not favourable: "Never did any book carry more internal evidence of its author. Every sentiment is completely Egerton's. There is very little story, and what there is told in a strange, unconnected way". Another coincidence is that in 1812 Brydges published a new edition of Arthur Collins' *Peerage of England* (of which the Austen family may possibly have possessed an earlier edition); the language of Collins' dedications of his several volumes to noble patrons curiously resembles that of his namesake in *Pride and Prejudice*. In spite of Jane Austen's opinion of Egerton Brydges and his works, it seems not without interest that, apart from the Prince Regent's librarian, he was (as D. J. Greene points out, *op. cit.* 1024), probably the only person seriously "addicted to literary composition" (to use his own words) with whom the novelist had any personal acquaintance.

David Gilson.

Note. There is a copy of Sir Egerton Brydges' *Autobiography*, and an early Victorian paperback edition of his novel *Mary de Clifford* (1844), at Jane Austen's House. Both were given by Miss Helen Lefroy.

Some Information about Jane Austen's Clerical Connections

Ever since the publication in 1870 of *A Memoir of Jane Austen* by James Edward Austen-Leigh and of the *Life and Letters* in 1913 by William and Richard Arthur Austen-Leigh there has been confusion over certain details of her family background. It may be useful to clear up some of these.

We are often told that Jane Austen's father George took Holy Orders in 1760 a little before he became Rector of Steventon in Hampshire in 1761, when he would have been nearly 30. Actually we can discover from Oxford and Winchester diocesan records—and notably from a Visitation held by the Bishop of Winchester in 1788—that George was ordained deacon at Oxford in March 1754 a little before his twenty-third birthday and priest



A bonnet, embroidered by Jane Austen for one of the children of her
niece Anna Lefroy.
(great grandsons of Admiral Sir Francis Austen)

in the following year at Rochester. From 1754 he combined his Fellowship at St John's College, Oxford with the post of Rector of Shipbourne in Kent, and from 1758 with duties also as Second Master at his own old school at Tonbridge. Until 1754 Shipbourne had been held by a cousin, the Rev. Henry Austen, who was in that year given the living of Steventon. Seven years later in 1761, when George followed him at Steventon, Henry was given West Wickham in Kent. These arrangements were simplified, no doubt, by the fact that the patronage of these two livings was in the hands of Austen relatives. This sort of thing is obviously at the back of Jane's mind as she manipulates the livings and marriages of the clergy in her novels.

George Austen was instituted to Steventon on 11th November 1761; but it seems that it was only after his marriage to Cassandra Leigh, at Bath on 26th April 1764, that he went into Hampshire to reside and to do duty. One of the first things he did there was to make a copy, in his own neat handwriting, of one of the Steventon Church registers from its beginnings in 1738, in order that he might then continue it from 1764—for baptisms and burials

—until his retirement from Steventon in 1801. He did not in that year resign the living, but left its duties to his eldest son James, continuing Rector in name and emoluments until his death at Bath in 1805. The authors of *Life and Letters* were puzzled by the statement in *A Memoir of Jane Austen* that George and Cassandra Austen began their married life not at Steventon Rectory but in the neighbouring parsonage at Deane. They wondered whether the then Rector of Deane were non-resident. Actually the wealthy Rev. William Hillman preferred to live a mile or so away at Ashe Park. The first three of the Austens' children were, therefore, born and baptised at Deane, in 1765, 1766 and 1767. The *Memoir* says that the family moved to Steventon—about a mile and a half away—in 1771. However, when Mrs. Austen's mother died in 1768 it was at Steventon that she was buried. Also there are in existence letters from George dated at Steventon in 1770, one of which is quoted in *Life and Letters*. Perhaps the change of residence was a little earlier than has been supposed. Their living first at Deane parsonage is perfectly understandable if the Curate who had served the Rev. Henry Austen until 1761 and George until he took up his duties himself in 1764 lived on for a while at Steventon Rectory. It has, unfortunately, so far proved impossible to trace the movements of this Curate, the Rev. Thomas Bathurst, beyond his taking a wedding at Steventon in November 1763. George Austen later became Rector of Deane as well as of Steventon; but this was not until 1773, when his uncle Francis Austen bought the right of presentation to this second living for his nephew. From that time onwards George had the right to let Deane parsonage to tenants; this he did until his son James married and needed somewhere to set up house.

James Austen was born on 13th February 1765 and, after education by his father and at St John's College, Oxford he was ordained deacon on a Fellowship there on 10th December 1787. Just at that time the Austens were preparing for a bout of amateur theatricals at Steventon. James provided the company with two prologues and an epilogue; and, according to his cousin Eliza de Feuillide, he was himself expected to perform in the plays. These were Mrs. Centlivre's *The Wonder, a Woman keeps a Secret* and *The Chances*. Some time later one of Jane's own miniature dramatic pieces, *The Visit*, inspired no doubt by this kind of dramatic activity, was dedicated to James and, "will, I hope, afford some amusement to so respectable a Curate as yourself." James first became a Curate on 14th July 1788, when he was licensed to Stoke Charity, a few miles south-west of Steventon. There were further theatricals during 1788 which could have provoked Jane's writing of *The Visit*; or it may have sprung from Christmas theatricals in 1788/89, at all events after James was in fact a Curate. *Life and Letters* knew nothing of the Stoke

Charity curacy; and the first it mentioned was the one that followed at Overton. James's ministrations at Stoke Charity may well have been infrequent; for he continued at St John's College; and there, from January 1789 until March 1790, he edited with his brother Henry the weekly paper called *The Loiterer*. In this the curacy theme is again heard—"Wanted—a Curacy in good sporting country" and an article on *How to be Happy tho' a Curate*. Some issues of *The Loiterer* may have been hammered out during vacations at Steventon, and must be reckoned as part of the setting of Jane's literary apprenticeship. It has even been suggested by Sir Zachary Cope, in the 1966 Summer Number of *The Book Collector*, that Jane actually contributed a letter to *The Loiterer*, signing herself "Sophia Sentiment."

One more mention of theatricals at Steventon—*Life and Letters* tells us that, "the last Steventon performance of which we have any knowledge took place in January 1790 when a farce called *The Sultan* was acted." This statement seems to be based on a manuscript collection of the Steventon prologues and epilogues written by James Austen—now the property of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust—which dates *The Sultan* so. The dating may, however, be incorrect; for *Austen Papers* edited in 1942 by R. A. Austen-Leigh—co-author of *Life and Letters*—contains a letter from the Austen's cousin Eliza de Feuillide written in a February from Paris, which speaks of this very play as if only recently performed, but gives no indication that the Bastille has fallen. The editor, therefore, dates this letter as February 1789, making it refer to a performance during the Christmas season of 1788/89, and not, as *Life and Letters* had placed it, a year later. From March 1790, when *The Loiterer* died a natural death, James was active as Curate at Overton. A larger village than Stoke Charity, lying on the road from Basingstoke to Andover. Overton was called by Jane in fun in her *Memoirs of Mr. Clifford*, "this celebrated city." During his time there James did duty at Laverstoke and met Anne Mathew. After his marriage to her he lived at Deane parsonage, continuing there after Anne's death in 1795 and his re-marriage the next year with Mary Lloyd, of whom we shall hear later. Meanwhile James became Vicar of Sherborne St John—a similar post, really, to that at Overton, for Sherborne had also a Rector—a post he held until his death in 1819. When George Austen retired from Steventon in 1801 James and Mary moved to the Rectory there; and on his father's death in 1805 he succeeded him as Rector, of Steventon but not of Deane. James therefore concluded his career as Rector of Steventon and Vicar of Sherborne St John, although for the last two and a half years of his life he was an invalid.

This connection of James with Sherborne St John may explain how his brother George—who seems to have been a lifelong invalid and who is nowhere mentioned in Jane's surviving letters—

came to be a resident of neighbouring Monk Sherborne at the time of his death in 1838. We hear of him once, when he was about four years old, in a letter written by his mother: "My poor little George . . . had a fit lately; it is near a twelve-month since he had one before. . . ." A much later remark in a letter of Jane's written from Southampton in 1808 may reveal her acquaintance with a deaf and dumb alphabet, which she may have acquired because George never learned to talk. Suitable guardians were, presumably, found for him at Monk Sherbourne, where his expenses may have been met by his brother Edward Knight. The cause of death is given as dropsy; and he was described simply as Gentleman.

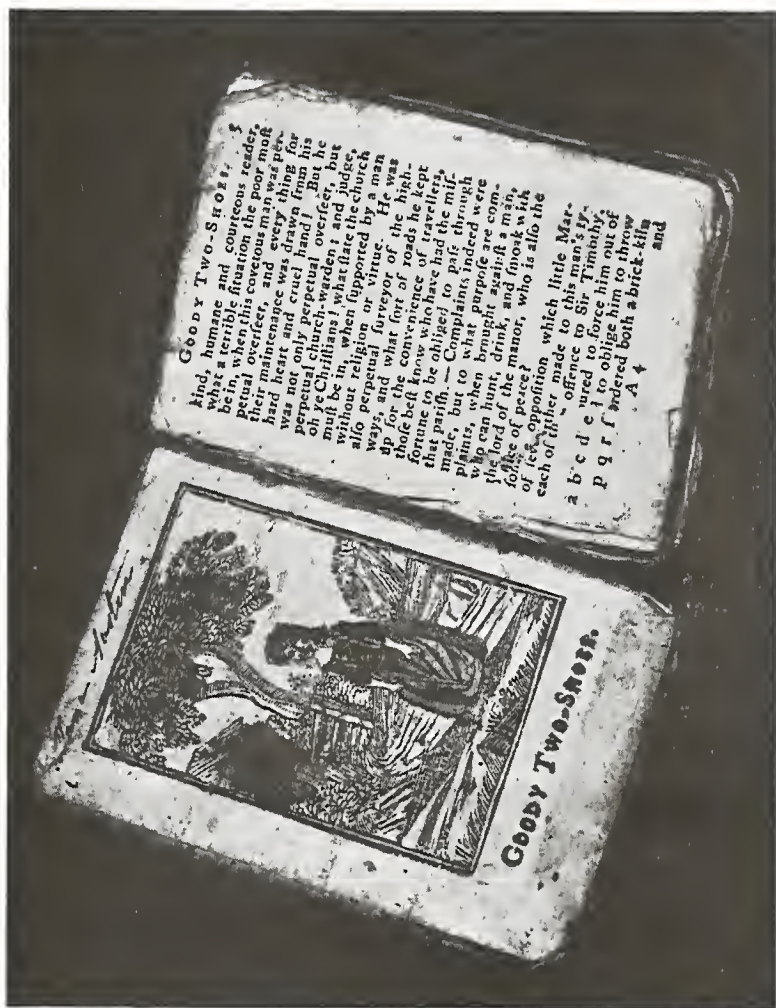
When James died, his brother Henry, ordained at the age of 45 in 1816, succeeded him as Rector of Steventon. Henry had had a varied career as a soldier and as a banker. The failure of his bank in 1816 turned his thoughts back to Holy Orders, which, according to Eliza de Feuillide, Henry's cousin and his first wife, had been his parents' earlier wish for him. About his career as a clergyman there has been considerable vagueness. He was ordained deacon on 21st December 1816, and priest on 28th February 1817, and became Curate of Chawton where his mother and sisters were living. In April 1818 a letter from James to his son James Edward mentions "your Uncle's appointment . . . Henry owes this appointment to our Cousin Mr. Walter to whom he is gone today in order to thank him & rub up his own Mathematics Algebra for a week." The conjecture in *Austen Papers* that the influential cousin was Mr Weaver Walter is surprising. A much more likely choice is the Rev. Henry Walter mentioned on page 6 of *Life and Letters*, who was among other things a mathematician. In the autumn of 1818 Henry went out to the British Embassy in Berlin as Chaplain and while there delivered a series of *Lectures upon . . . Genesis*. Henry became Rector of Steventon in January 1820; and when the *Lectures* were published he was described on their title-page as Rector of Steventon and Domestic Chaplain to H R H the Duke of Cumberland and the Rt Hon. the Earl of Morley. It would be interesting to know more of these last offices—but presumably the *appointment* of 1818 was to the Embassy and not one of these. In June 1822 Henry was joined at Steventon as Curate by his nephew, William Knight—son of Edward Austen who had changed his surname to Knight—and William succeeded Henry as Rector a year later. Meanwhile Henry turned his face in the direction of Farnham where he obtained a Curacy in August 1822—and a house to live in—and a year later was Master of Farnham Grammar School. In 1824 he became Perpetual Curate of nearby Bentley—the title implies no less status than that of parish priest; a house was built for him there. His sister Cassandra reports in her letters on the

pleasantness of having Henry within a reasonable distance of Chawton; and he continued at Bentley until he resigned in July 1839. He was never very well off; his second wife Eleanor Jackson did not enjoy good health; but he seems to have been a conscientious priest. He died in Tunbridge Wells in 1850.

One of George Austen's tenants at Deane parsonage was a Mrs Lloyd who lived there with her two unmarried daughters Martha and Mary from 1789 to 1792—it was this Mary Lloyd who became James Austen's second wife. Mrs Lloyd was the widow of a former Rector of Enborne near Newbury and was a cousin of Lord Craven. Her daughter Eliza had married her own cousin the Rev. Fulwar Fowle, the eldest son of the Vicar of Kintbury in Berkshire and himself the Rector of Elkstone in Gloucestershire. By 1795 Cassandra Austen, Jane's sister, was engaged to Fulwar's brother Thomas, the Rector of Allington in Wiltshire. This was not a valuable living; and Tom was invited to join an expedition to the West Indies as Chaplain to the regiment of his kinsman Lord Craven, leaving his duties at Allington to a Curate. It is said that he hoped, on his anticipated return to England, for a better living in Shropshire, where Lord Craven had patronage. A letter from Mrs Austen to Mary Lloyd in 1796 welcoming her as a daughter-in-law says, "I look forward to you as a real comfort to me in my old age when Cassandra is gone into Shropshire, and Jane—the Lord knows where." Tom in fact died of yellow fever in the West Indies and Cassandra remained at home unmarried. *Life and Letters* says of Lord Craven that, "one of the livings in his gift was Ryton in Shropshire"; and it has for long enough been echoed that this is where Tom and Cassandra might have made a home. Now there are in Shropshire two places similarly named—Ruyton, about fifteen miles north-west of Shrewsbury, and Ryton, near Shifnal. In the former parish Lord Craven was a considerable landowner; but in neither was he the patron of the living—a fact that can be verified from diocesan records at Lichfield. So the Austens could not have thought correctly in terms of Ruyton or Ryton for Tom. Lord Craven was, however, the patron of a parish adjacent to Ruyton called West Felton; and they may have used the name Ruyton loosely to mean this parish. If so, West Felton was provided with a Rector who held sway from 1764 to 1815; so Tom would have been disappointed there! Another of Lord Craven's parishes near Ludlow had an even longer lived Rector from 1765 to 1832. A third parish, however, could in 1799 have been more available. This was Wistanstow near Craven Arms; and, interestingly enough, it must be the parish referred to in one of Jane's letters. In 1799 the Rev. Robert Augustus Johnson died—the husband of the sixth Lord Craven's sister. He had been Rector of Wistanstow and of Hamstall Ridware in Staffordshire. There the patron, the Hon. Mary Leigh of Stoneleigh, at once offered the living to her kinsman Edward

Cooper. Jane refers to this: "Mrs. Leigh has begged his acceptance of the Rectory of Hamstall Ridware in Staffordshire vacant by Mr. Johnson's death," and a few lines later, "We can learn nothing of the disposal of the other living." What more likely than that she means Mr Johnson's *other living* of Wistanstow? She continues. "I have not the smallest notion of Fulwar's having it. Lord Craven has probably other connections and more intimate ones, in that line, than he now has with the Kintbury family." Fulwar Fowle had, by this date, succeeded his father as Vicar of Kintbury; and Lord Craven might have considered him amply provided for. Nevertheless, if Tom Fowle had in 1797 returned to England, Lord Craven might have offered him Wistanstow in Shropshire. Thither he and Cassandra might have gone, but never to Ryton near Shifnal or to Ruyton—even if the name was being used loosely for neighbouring West Felton. Wistanstow was in fact given to a George Nott, who was succeeded there by Robert Henry Johnson, son of Robert Augustus, in 1806. Perhaps Jane foresaw some such event. For an earlier glimpse of Robert Augustus we may turn to *The Beautiful Lady Craven* Vol. I pp. 46-47 edited by A. M. Broadley and L. Melville, where we find also a somewhat unfavourable account of his wife, the sixth Lord Craven's sister. When her cousin, the Hon. Mary Leigh died in 1806, causing considerable confusion over her will, Jane's uncle, James Leigh Perrot, reported that "Her nearest relations, who may be interested in the Personal Property" were gathering in London, the widowed Mrs Johnson among them. At the same time, of course, the Rev. Thomas Leigh of Adlestrop was hastening to Stoneleigh Abbey with his cousin Mrs Austen and her daughters. Cassandra Austen's life continued to be spent as a companion to her mother and sister, and in visiting her brother Edward's family at Godmersham in Kent. We owe the priceless series of Jane's surviving letters to the occasions when she and Cassandra were separated. These letters begin in 1796; and from then onwards the *Memoir* of 1870, *Life and Letters* of 1913 and all later biographies become controlled by them, and less and less likely to conjecture and error.

William Jarvis
Rector of Allington, Wilts
1963-71



A little copy of *Goody Two-Shoes*, which belonged to Jane Austen, with her name written inside the front cover.
(great grandsons of Admiral Sir Francis Austen)

IN BETWEEN—ANNE ELLIOT MARRIES A SAILOR AND CHARLOTTE HEYWOOD GOES TO THE SEASIDE

Address given by Dr Tony Tanner
at the Annual General Meeting

The figure of the young girl who does not have a secure or defined position in society is similar in Jane Austen's work in which her heroines tend to be either over-privileged, like Emma, or under-privileged like Fanny Price. The over-privileged think that they know their place, as we say, but they have to learn to redefine it; the under-privileged know that they don't have a place and they have to find one. This figure we may call the girl on the threshold, existing in that limbo space between the house of the father which has to be left and the house of the husband which has yet to be found. No longer a child and not yet a wife this threshold heroine is, precisely, in between, and she lives in between-ness. In this I think, for Jane Austen these girls incorporated or reflected on the level of individual biography some problematical aspects of the England of her day as she perceived it, which was not what it was, nor yet what it was to become, as it were. You will remember the Musgroves in *Persuasion*—'The Musgroves, like their houses, were in a state of alteration, perhaps of improvement. The father and mother were in the old English style, and the young people in the new'.—note the hesitation in that 'perhaps'—Jane Austen is not taking sides. There is no malice in the text directed against the new young people. 'Their dress had every advantage, their faces were rather pretty, their spirits extremely good, their manners unembarrassed and pleasant; they were of consequence at home, and favourites abroad.' They live to be 'fashionable, happy, and merry' and this frankly hedonistic commitment is not attacked by Jane Austen, for just as she knew there was a stability which preserved and transmitted values, so she knew there was an empty repetition of habit which was stagnation, and while she showed very clearly that there was a self-gratifying appetite which led to dissoluteness and destruction (as in the figures and fates of the Crawfords) so she recognised that there was a frankly self-delighting energy which engendered those innovations and renovations—those **differences**, as we say—which keep a society alive. But Anne Elliot is no longer of the old nor yet does she belong to the new. She does not disapprove of the Musgrove children but 'she would not have given up her own more elegant and cultivated mind for all their enjoyments'. Nor can she find self-realisation in her father's house. She is in between.

Her position is in many ways exemplary and I want to look at it a little more closely—I will be coming back to her father's house later. *Persuasion* opens in a rather remarkable way. 'Sir

Walter Elliot, of Kellynch-hall, in Somersetshire, was a man who, for his own amusement never took up any book but the *Baronetage*; there he found occupation for an idle hour, and consolation in a distressed one; there his faculties were roused into admiration and respect, by contemplating the limited remnant of earliest patents; there any unwelcome sensations, arising from domestic affairs, changed naturally into pity and contempt, as he turned over the almost endless creations of the last century—and there, if every other leaf were powerless, he could read his own history with an interest which never failed—this was the page at which the favourite volume always opened: ‘*ELLIOT OF KELLYNCH-HALL*.’

Jane Austen opens her book with the description of a man looking at a book in which he reads the same words as her book opens with—*Elliot of Kellynch-Hall*. This is the kind of teasing regression which we have become accustomed to in contemporary writers but which no-one associates with the work of Jane Austen. It alerts us to at least two important considerations—the dangers involved in seeking validation and self-justification in book as opposed to life, in record rather than in action, in name as opposed to function; and the absolutely negative ‘vanity’ (her key word for Sir Walter) in looking for and finding one’s familial and social position, one’s reality, in an inscription rather than in a pattern of behaviour, in a sign rather than the range of responsibilities which it implicitly signifies. We know how fond Sir Walter Elliot is of mirrors and how hopelessly and hurtfully unaware of the real needs and feelings of his dependants he is. This opening situation poses someone fixed in an ultimate solipsism gazing with inexhaustible pleasure into the textual mirror which simply gives him back his name. The opening of Jane Austen’s text—a title, a name, a domicile, a geographic location—implies a whole series of unwritten obligations and responsibilities related to rank, family, society, and the very land itself, none of which Sir Walter Elliot, book-bound and self-mesmerised, either keeps or recognises. He is only interested in himself and what reflects him—mirrors or daughters. Thus he likes Elizabeth because she is ‘very like himself’—this is parenthood as narcissism—and Mary has ‘acquired a little artificial importance’ because she has married into a tolerably respectful family—‘but Anne, with an elegance of mind and sweetness of character, which must have placed her high with any people of real understanding, was nobody with either father or sister: her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way;—she was only Anne’. Only Anne—no rank, no effective surname, no house, no location; her words are weightless, and physically speaking she always has to ‘give way’—i.e. accept perpetual displacement. She is a speaker who is unheard; she is a body who is a ‘nobody’. I emphasise this because the problems of

the body who is, socially speaking, a nobody, were to engage many of the great nineteenth century writers. We might recall here that in one of the seminal eighteenth century novel, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Julie's father refuses to even listen to the idea of her marrying Saint-Preux because Saint-Preux is what he calls 'un quidam' which means an unnamed individual or in dictionary terms 'Person (name unknown)'. This is to say that as far as the father is concerned, Saint-Preux exists in a state of 'quidamity' and I have to assure you that the word does in fact exist! As far as her father is concerned Anne also exists in that state of quidamity—she was nobody, she was only Anne. He had never indulged much hope, he had now none, of ever reading her name in any other page of his favourite work'. Until she is, as it were, reborn in terms of writing in the Baronetage she doesn't exist—not to be in the book is thus not to **be**. We may laugh at Sir Walter but Jane Austen makes it very clear what kind of perversity is involved in such a radical confusion or inversion of values whereby script and name take absolute precedence over offspring and dependants: or, to put it another way, when you can't see the body for the book.

Anne, then, is perpetually dis-placed, always 'giving way' as opposed to having her **own** way—it is worth emphasising the metaphor. The story of her life consists precisely in having had her own way blocked, refused, negated. One might almost think of the book as being about dis-suasion for she is not urged or forced into doing something which she doesn't want to do, but into **not** doing something which her whole emotional being tells her is—the right way (i.e. marry Captain Wentworth at a time when he had no fortune). Her words carry no weight. So when it comes to their early engagement (and they are said to fall 'rapidly and deeply in love') Sir Walter—and Jane Austen could not have chosen her words better—'gave it all the negative', the negative of 'great astonishment, great coldness, great silence' but the important point is in the generic 'negative'. He is a father who in every way negates his daughter—gives her all the negative. Now I am not here going into the whole matter of to what extent Jane Austen might seem to approve or disapprove of the 'persuasion' exercised by Lady Russell'; there is rich ambiguity there, hesitation as I called it, and phrases like 'the fair interference of friendship' in their poised ambivalence indicate that Jane Austen knew all about the multiple motivations which are at work in the impulse to exert some apparently beneficent control over a person in a weaker position. There is no point at which you can clearly distinguish persuasion from constraint or constraint from coercion, and quite properly she leaves it a blur, a confusion if you will—for it is out of just that confusion that Anne the nobody has to somehow remake her life. What Jane Austen does say is this. 'She has been forced into prudence in her youth, she learned romance as

she grew older—the natural sequence of an unnatural beginning'. Most of Jane Austen's heroines have to learn some kind of prudence (not Fanny Price who has suffered for her undeviating dedication to prudence!) Anne, born into repression and non-recognition has to **learn** romance, a deliberate oxymoron surely, for romance is associated with spontaneous feelings. But in Anne's case these had been blocked; here father gave it all the negative. To find her own positive she has, as it were, to dis-educate herself from the tutoring authorities who, whether by silence or disapproval or forceful opposition, dominated that early part of her life when she was—in relation to Captain Wentworth—becoming a somebody. I want to stress the rather unusual process that Jane Austen is embarking on in starting her novel in this way. The whole story of Anne's first romance with Mr. Wentworth is recounted in the first paragraph of Chapter 4—that is to say what could and did make up the basic lineaments of her other novels—how the unattached young girl finally finds the most appropriate man who proposes because of her personal qualities and not for reasons of social advancement or whatever—is here reduced to a summary paragraph. It is a novel in brief. But the marriage is blocked by the father and others so Anne has to start on a long and arduous second life, as it were, which is based on loss, denial, deprivation. This is the 'unnatural beginning' to her life, and to Jane Austen's novel which differs quite radically from her previous works in which, as I said, her heroines tend to graduate from romance to prudence. And because of what she has lost and regretted losing (again an unusual condition for the Jane Austen heroine, who has usually not yet had any significant romance when the book opens) Anne undergoes a new kind of trial and tribulation since any reference to Captain Wentworth offers 'a new trial to Anne's nerves' so that she has to 'teach herself to be insensible on such points'. Among other things Anne Elliot has to combine sense and insensibility, again a change from Jane Austen's earlier work.

In all this I think it is worth thinking a little more about Captain Wentworth's profession. If we recall the husbands of previous Jane Austen heroines—Knightley, Darcy, Edmund Bertram and so on—we are usually confronted with responsible land owners or an intending clergyman. But Captain Wentworth is of course a sailor and in writing about sailors Jane Austen identifies in that brotherhood a range of values which obtain there more obviously and sincerely than they seemed to do in society. Thus when Anne is in the party with Captain Harville and Captain Benwick and their friends, she experiences 'a bewitching charm in a degree of hospitality so uncommon, so unlike the usual style of give-and-take invitations, and dinners of formality and display'. And Louisa is allowed to expound 'on the character of the navy—their friend-

liness, their openness, their uprightness' and warmth and so on. Society in the form of Sir Walter Elliot is all empty self-regarding form and display—he has no sense of responsibility to his position, to the land, and it is significant that he rents his house to go and participate in the meaningless frivolities in Bath. This matter of renting his house is worth pausing over for a moment. The notion —'Quit Kellynch-hall'—is initially horrendous to Sir Walter. But he would as he says 'sooner quit Kellynch-hall' than undertake any economies or constraints on his unrestricted pursuit of pleasure. His relation to his house is not a responsible one—he does not see his house as part of a larger context, an inter-related rural society, an ecology, if you will; its more like a pleasure drome or a three dimensional mirror which flatters his vanity. So he agrees to 'quit' it if he cannot have those pleasures. But note that 'Sir Walter could not have borne the degradation of being known to design letting his house—Mr Shepherd had once mentioned the word "advertise"—but never dared approach it again'. I will come back to 'advertising' but here again we note that Sir Walter wants the profits of 'renting' while still pretending to belong to an aristocracy which did not contaminate itself with contact with any kind of 'trade' or commerce. This is the self-deception of a figure no longer sensible of the significance of his social rank. When he does consider renting it he thinks of it in terms of 'a prize' for the fortunate tenant—a prize! he has no appreciation of the real value of his inherited house. And I will just note the areas in which he doesn't really want the new tenant to have access. 'The park would be open to him of course . . . but what restrictions I might impose on the use of the pleasure grounds, is another thing. I am not fond of the idea of my shrubberies being always approachable'. Funny of course—but again there is no sense of the importance and significance of the house of his fathers, the house in which he so signally fails in his paternal duties. To abandon it in exchange for money for mere pleasure rather than 'economise' is a very notable dereliction of his duties. This is an alteration which is most definitely not 'perhaps an improvement' but indisputably a degradation.

If society in the form of Sir Walter has sacrificed responsibility to egoism, vanity and pleasure—society in the form of Mr Elliot the cousin is unmitigatedly evil. Hence the importance of the testimony of poor Mrs. Smith—a victim of the inequities of the social system and again a rather new kind of character for Jane Austen to introduce into her world. She tells Anne that 'Mr. Elliot is a man without heart or conscience; who, for his own interest or ease, would be guilty of any treachery, that could be perpetrated without risk of his general character'. This description is not challenged but endorsed by the book. It would seem then, that to find a locus and image of the values Jane Austen was

turning from the landed society to a group whose responsibilities are to each other and to the country but not to the existing social structure (thus the naval figures may not have exquisite manners, they may lack 'polish', but they are authentic, open, generous, loyal etc.) In Sir Walter's world of mere rank and mirrors Anne is nobody; she gains her identity by marrying effectively *out* of society. You will remember that at the end her one regret is that she has 'no relations to bestow on him which a man of sense could value . . . no family to receive and estimate him properly'. Her new family is precisely the brotherhood of the sea and for a brief moment one is oddly close to Conrad and his sense of the hypocrisies of society on land and the values of fidelity within the ranks of the navy. The conclusion of the book is worth quoting as it is quite unlike the conclusions to her previous novels. 'His profession was all that could ever make her friends wish that tenderness less; the dread of a future war all that could dim her sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm from belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance'. The possibility of war introduces a note of potential insecurity and uncertainty into the usual concluding felicities, and, perhaps even more interesting, the new location for the true practice of the 'domestic virtues' has been moved out of conventional society into a group whose commitment is to the nation rather than this or that parish or village, and whose character values are developed not out of devotion to the land but engagement with the sea. We have come a long way from Mansfield Park and Pemberley.

I want to return briefly to Anne's situation as what I have called a threshold figure, the nobody in the house who always has to 'give way'. One consequence of this position is that she is literally moved about or displaced quite frequently and in the course of this she learns something which indicates once again Jane Austen's uncanny alertness to the operations of society. 'Anne had not wanted this visit to Uppercross, to learn that a removal from one set of people to another, though at a distance of only three miles, will often include a total change of conversation, opinion, and idea. . . . She acknowledged it to be very fitting, that every little social commonwealth should dictate its own matters of discourse'. This awareness that within the one common language—English—there can be innumerable discourses according to group, place etc. is a very crucial one. It is not the same thing as a dialect but what the French critic Roland Barthes calls an 'idiolect'—'the language of a linguistic community, that is of a group of persons who all interpret in the same way all linguistic statements.' This is not the arid point it may sound since a great many problems in Jane Austen's world, or our own come to that, stem from the fact that

people within the same language can very often not really hear each other because they are operating within different discourses or idiolects. It is characteristic of many of Jane Austen's heroines that they are aware when people are operating within different discourses—an awareness which is an aspect of their sense and very often a consequence of their detachment or isolation. If you are 'in between' then you have no settled discourse of your own and are made aware of differences in the discourses around you. No one is more aware of this than Anne Elliot and it teaches her another painful but salutary lesson—'the art of knowing our own nothingness beyond our own circle, was become necessary for her.' Just as the one language is in fact made up of many discourses, so the one society is made up of many 'circles' and in many of these circles one is a nothing just as in some discourses one is inaudible—as I would be, say, at a convention of physicists. Anne's word carried no weight you remember—precisely because she is a nobody within the circle of her own family. Her speech can only take on its full value when she is taken into a new circle—the navy. In between she is, well—in between.

The question of circles and discourse is taken up again in *Sanditon* where in fact there are so many intersecting 'circles' that a certain kind of comical vertigo is one of the characteristic effects of this marvellous unfinished fragment of a novel. The observer heroine who is in between in this work is Charlotte Heywood but though she is displaced it is a matter of a holiday by the seaside and not a plight. For she comes from the very stable family of Mr Heywood who is indeed first seen working in the fields among his haymakers and who is obviously intended as a simplified or even somewhat mythological figure exemplifying an ideal commitment to the land, to his locale. We are told that the movements of the Heywoods 'had long been limited to one small circle' and that their way of life is 'stationary and healthy'. It is Mr Parker who breaks into that circle when his carriage is overturned near the Heywoods' property and it is to Mr Parker's house in Sanditon that Charlotte Heywood is invited for a holiday. The novel opens with that carriage accident and I have commented on that elsewhere. But it is worth noting one or two things about it. Mr Parker is on what turns out to be a foolish and basically misinformed errand—he has been misled by advertisements in the papers concerning a doctor seeking a new practice and this has brought him along an inappropriate road in the wrong place. The point is worth making because two things often go together in this work—people make themselves excessively busy in misdirected ways and at the same time they get things wrong. Thus there is a comically inordinate amount of fuss and manoeuvring on the part of Mr Parker's sisters to procure some families to take lodgings in Sanditon—'I will not tell you how many people I have

employed in the business—'Wheel within wheel' writes one of them proudly, and in the event it turns out that the two different families they thought they had arranged to come are one and the same family, the confusion coming about through the absurd multiplication of 'busy' communications along a chain of people who are 'extremely intimate' but don't really know each other—a parody of true communal inter-relatedness. About all this Charlotte thinks 'Unaccountable officiousness!—Activity run mad!' and Jane Austen later talks of the Parkers' 'spirit of restless activity' a phrase which in manuscript read 'the disease of activity.' Now since Jane Austen certainly did not approve of more inactivity, indolence, and inertia (think of Lady Bertram) we must note that it is a certain **kind** of activity being referred to, and I think we can call it deranged activity, or activity without a stable purposive centre. Mr Heywood has his 'one small circle' and he is clearly a functioning centre. But other kinds of 'circles' are proliferating in the book, particularly in Sanditon which is, remember, in many ways an artificial creation as a resort town. Thus we read that 'the Miss Beauforts were soon satisfied with "the circle in which they moved in Sanditon" to use a proper phrase, for everybody must now "move in a circle"—to the prevalence of which rotatory motion, is perhaps to be attributed the giddiness and false steps of many.' And while I am talking about circles I will remind you that at Sanditon there is a 'circulating library' which, notes Jane Austen wryly if not reproachfully, 'afforded every thing; all the useless things in the world that could not be done without.' A 'demand for everything' is one of the positive features of Sanditon as described by Mr Parker, and I think there is a connection between a 'want of employment' (Mr. Parker has 'no profession'), an unfocused 'demand' for something or other, and the kind of restless busyness which earns the suppressed but telling description—'the disease of activity'.

Let me return to the beginning. Mr Parker's errand and accident bring together one or two things, among them advertising and medicine. His newspaper-inspired search for a non-existent doctor ironically enough earns him a badly sprained ankle, but I want to use the opportunity of this opening conjunction to suggest that Jane Austen was very aware of the discourses of advertising and medicine and quack medicine, and that whereas Mr Parker is an 'enthusiast' and is mainly interested in 'advertising' and 'puffing' his 'profitable speculation' in Sanditon, while his sisters are hypochondriac busy-bodies, Jane Austen could perceive that there was a kind of possible perversion of discourse common to both—for both can become obsessions and as it were take over the speaker until he or she is in the deceptive and fabricating grip of the discourse and out of touch with reality. If that all sounds rather abstract let me give you some example from the book itself since

Jane Austen can demonstrate what I am talking about far better than I can describe it. Let us consider the discourse of hypochondria, and in passing let me acknowledge that other people have noted that there are many references to illness in this fragment and that this, it is usually suggested, is explicable largely in terms of the fact that Jane Austen was herself ill, in fact dying, when she wrote it. That may well be true, but being the artist she was, whatever personal misery or pain she may have been experiencing, in her writing the obsession with ideas of illness is depersonalised and transformed into a social phenomenon which we are invited to consider and find, to use her own words, 'very striking—and very amusing—or very melancholy, just as satire or morality might prevail' (note the readiness to oscillate across a spectrum of attitudes). Part of Mr Parker's advertising rhetoric about the virtues of Sanditon is that the sea air and bathing are 'a match for every disorder, of the stomach, the lungs or the blood; they were anti-spasmodic, anti-pulmonary, anti-sceptic, anti-bilious and anti-rheumatic.' Well, no doubt sea air and bathing are good for us but Jane Austen is noting an excess—the language getting out of control. The possible effect of this kind of excess taken in another direction is made very clear in the quite fantastic accounts his sisters give of their imagined ailments. I will quote from one of their letters to Mr Parker: 'Your letter . . . found me suffering under a more severe attack than usual of my old grievance, spasmodic bile and hardly able to crawl from my bed to the sofa—But how were you treated?—Send me more particulars in your next . . . (referring to an invitation to visit Sanditon) I doubt whether Susan's nerves would be equal to the effort. She has been suffering much from the headache and six leeches a day for ten days together relieved her so little that we thought it right to change our measures—and being convinced on examination that much of the evil lay in her gum, I persuaded her to attack the disorder there. She has accordingly had three teeth drawn and is decidedly better, but her nerves are a good deal deranged. She can only speak in a whisper—and fainted away twice this morning on poor Arthur's trying to suppress a cough.' Well, one is glad to learn that she is 'decidedly better'. Now the point in all this is not that people don't get ill because of course they do—who better to know it than Jane Austen at the time; and by the same token there is a need for a discourse of symptoms, prescriptions, remedies, and so on. What Jane Austen is depicting, with the incisive unsentimental humour we associate with her, is the way in which that discourse can take over the individual so that what should be in a normal person a reasonable concern for health becomes an obsession with **unhealth** which creates the sickness it purports to be concerned with curing. Note the sister's interest in the details of Mr Parker's accident—'send me more particulars'. And once again let me repeat that Jane Austen attributes both Mr Parker's

obsession with advertising some semi-imaginary Sanditon and his sisters' devotion to the terminology of illness to 'want of employment'; as she puts it 'while the eldest brother found vent for his superfluity of sensation as a projector, the sisters were perhaps driven to dissipate theirs in the invention of odd complaints.' The problems stemming from 'want of employment'—not quite the same thing as unemployment—were to occupy many of the great nineteenth century novelists, in particular as they related to the position of women in society, and here as so often we find Jane Austen anticipating more weighty versions of 19th century problems which were to come. I do not want to give the impression that there is anything ponderous or gloomy about her treatment of this particular brand of *malades imaginaires*. Her touch is as always as light as it is firm. I cannot resist reminding you of the young brother Arthur who, somewhat feebly to be sure, masks a truly fabulous gluttony and idleness under the terms of neurological disorder. Drinking, it turns out, is very good for his nervous condition. "The more wine I drink (in moderation) the better I am"—an unforgettable proposition which would not be out of place in *Alice through the Looking Glass*! At the same time Jane Austen could see that what she calls 'enjoyment in invalidism' could have very destructive effects—on self and others. She saw, as other great writers have seen, the dangers and perversities which could be involved in 'quack medicine' and for comparison we can look back to Ben Jonson, or more pertinently forward to Flaubert's Monsieur Homais, the quack chemist in *Madam Bovary* whose interfering intrusions of advice and help—'unaccountable officiousness—activity run mad' would be a good comment on him as well—are ruinous. He is a man who destroys what he purports to cure. Jane Austen knew about such people.

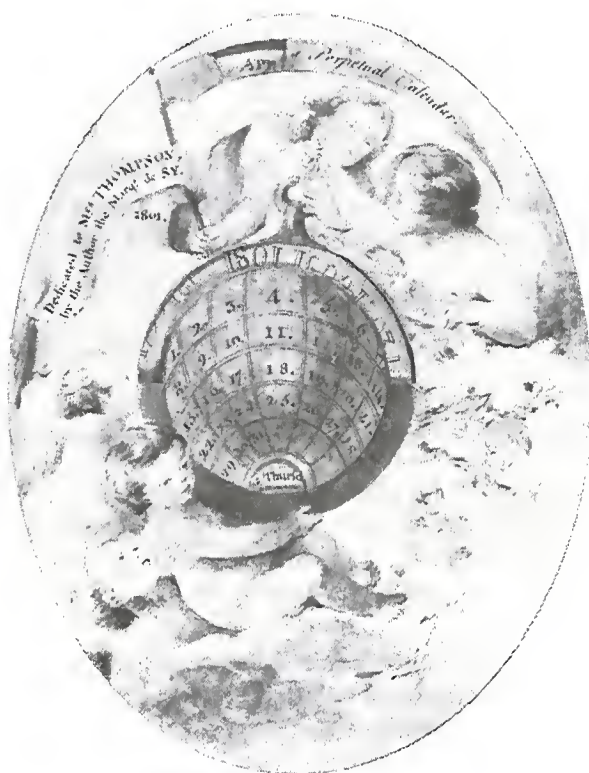
I have been talking about discourses and may have seemed to have wandered away from the threshold heroine who is 'in between'. I will be coming back to Charlotte Heywood and the other displaced girl in **Sanditon**—Clara Brereton—but I want to mention a third discourse—along with advertising and hypochondria—which is shown to be capable of manufacturing the most ludicrous parodies of pseudo-sense, or more properly capable of generating the most utter nonsense, and I do it with a sense of an appropriate irony considering my present activity, and that is—literary criticism! I am referring to Sir Edward Denham's attempts to impress Charlotte. First he begins to 'stagger her with the number of his quotations, and the bewilderment of some of his sentences.' "Do you remember," said he, "Scott's beautiful lines on the sea?—Oh! what a description they convey!—They are never out of my thoughts when I walk here.—That man who can read them unmoved must have the nerves of an assassin!—Heaven defend me from meeting such a man unarmed". Charlotte admits to not remembering any lines by Scott on the sea and as far as I

can recall she is right, though there is the odd reference to the 'distant Tweed' and 'Sweet Teviot'. Sir Edward's reply is, well, instructive. 'Do you not indeed?—Nor can I exactly recall the beginning at this moment.' He goes on with a lot more of this splendid gibberish until Charlotte begins to wonder not just why he is speaking nonsense but why he is speaking so very **much** nonsense! To Charlotte 'he seemed very full of some feelings or other, and very much addicted to all the newest-fashioned hard words—had not a very clear brain she presumed, and talked a good deal by rote.' I might add that goes very exactly for quite a number of literary critics writing today and it is another example of Jane Austen's unerring ear for another of those 'idiolects' I mentioned earlier. This is all excellent fun but again Jane Austen could see a latent danger in this perversion of a discourse. In relation to Burns Sir Edward says things like 'the corruscations of talent, elicited by impassioned feelings in the breast of man, are perhaps incompatible with some of the prosaic decencies of life, nor can you, loveliest Miss Heywood, nor can any woman be a fair judge of what a man may be propelled to say, write or do, by the sovereign impulses of illimitable ardour.' Jane Austen comments 'This was very fine;—but if Charlotte understood it at all, not very moral.' What in fact it is is very high order balderdash. But there is a moral matter involved here. Asked which novels he approved of, Sir Edward answers that he most admires the ones which 'exhibit the progress of strong passion from the first germ of incipient susceptibility to the utmost energies of reason half-dethroned.' and then more stuff attempting to justify and romanticise and glorify the imperatives of male lust. But the enthroning and dethroning of reason were genuinely important matters in this period in particular, and in his own fatuous and empty-headed way Sir Edward is in fact participating in the aesthetic discourse of the day and there were indeed some entirely serious thinkers who wrote against the imperial rule of reason. The point is that a man, say, like William Blake, did it rather better than Sir Edward. What the latter is doing is trying to use the language of a literary criticism to dignify, or as we may say 'novel-ise' his intention to seduce Clara Brereton. As a matter of fact it is rather the other way around and here again Jane Austen shows how clearly she understood the problematical relationship between books and life. Sir Edward, we are told, read Richardson at an early age, or rather mis-read him—and the intention to be seducer came from the book. His reading, thus, became literally per-verted and whatever he read he derived 'incentive to voice from the history of its overthrow, (and) gathered only hard words and involved sentences from the style of our most approved writers'. The result is 'he felt that he was formed to be a dangerous man—quite in the line of the Lovelaces.' And Clara in her vulnerable condition suggests the appropriate emulation of the Lovelace fictional rape. 'Her

seduction was quite determined. Her situation in every way called for it.' Jane Austen is very amusing about his preformed 'literary' plan campaign—he thinks perhaps that a good place for the rape would be Timbuctoo 'but the expense alas! of measures in that masterly style was ill-suited to his purse, and prudence obliged him to prefer the quietest sort of ruin and disgrace for the object of his affections, to the more renowned.' Clara has not the slightest intention of being seduced but this does not put him off. 'He knew his business' says Jane Austen with the nicest kind of irony, given that she is depicting a world in which everybody is very busy and seems to know their 'business' (both pronunciations) but it is busy-ness gone wrong, "activity run mad". Sir Edward is funny because made transparently absurd—but ruined girls are ruined girls, or at least they used to be—and Jane Austen knows that an absurd figure can also be a dangerous one. And, to come back to my point, Sir Edward is in the grip of a certain bad pseudo-literary discourse, as Mr Parker was of a certain bad advertising discourse, and his sisters of a certain bad pseudo-medical discourse. When a person is in the grip of a discourse, particularly if—as in these cases to varying degrees it is—it is a perversion and debasement of a more genuine discourse, then we say that the discourse speaks them and not that they speak the discourse. Sanditon is full of people not only dashing around in circles but speaking incessantly. But Jane Austen shows that they are really—**being spoken**. Our heroine who, to come back to my basic point, is in between all these discourses—occasionally somewhat deafened by them but never deceived into them—can hear these perversions and is vigilant over her own inner and outer discourse, trying always to maintain a vocabulary that is at once flexible and firm and the most appropriate one for the occasion. Jane Austen's heroines are often silent, sometimes from necessity, from suffering, from repression, or from sheer lowliness of social or familial position (Anne was a nobody—so her words carried no weight—i.e. were not heard). But, for the most part, when they speak—they speak truly and truly speak. So those Jane Austen girls who are in between—in between bad fathers like Sir Walter who 'give them all the negative' and unprincipled young men willing to exploit their vulnerable unmarried condition like Mr Elliot and Edward Denham, as well as more reliable young men like Captain Wentworth and perhaps Mr Parker's brother Sidney—these girls are also in between the various discourses which they have to engage with but which they refuse to be taken over by; they thus become, not only maintainers of good sense, and upholders of appropriate values in a changing world, but very important guardians of the language—as their own author so supremely was

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1977



A late 18th century calendar.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is 50p,
and a single payment of £10 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques. etc should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1977

Membership

There were 120 new members during the year, of whom 33 became Life Members, as did 19 old members. There are now 1,688 individual members, as well as 43 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the 50p Annual Subscription, and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday, 16th July, when 500 members and their guests were present.

Lord David Cecil presided, and asked that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting should be taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Report, and, in the absence of the Hon. Treasurer, the accounts, for 1976. These resolutions were seconded by Mr D. V. Roberts, and carried.

Dr Andrew Wright of the University of Los Angeles, and who had addressed the Annual Meeting in 1961, proposed the re-election of Lord David Cecil as President, Mr John Gore as Vice-President, and Sir Hugh Smiley as Chairman. This was seconded by Miss J. M. Villiers, and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by Dr. Juliet McMaster, Professor of English at the University of Alberta, Canada, who spoke on "Jane Austen and the Symptoms of Love".

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr Brian Southam, seconded by Mrs L. Brierley, and carried.

The President closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Knight for once more lending Chawton House for the meeting.

Annual General Meeting 1978

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 15th July. The meeting will be addressed by Dr Marilyn Butler, fellow of St Hugh's College, Oxford.

Collected Reports 1966-75

This second volume of Collected Reports is available from the Hon. Secretary at £7.50, post free.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, Concord Books, 4 Fitzharding Street, W1H 0AH.

Volume the Second

Members of the Society will have been delighted to see that Jane Austen's *Volume the Second* was bought by the British Library. It was suggested to Dr Daniel Waley, Keeper of Manuscripts, that members might like to send donations to the British Library, in order to release funds for further purchases, and to show their pleasure in that *Volume the Second* has remained in this country. Cheques made out to The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, and sent to its address at Great Russell Street, WC1B 3DG, showing that the donor is a member of this Society, will be gratefully received.

Jane Austen's Letters

The Society would like to purchase any new or good secondhand copies of Dr R. W. Chapman's complete edition of Jane Austen's Letters, and copies of the Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society 1949-65.

Austen References in an 18th Century Diary

Visitors to the Jane Austen House at Chawton may see, on the wall of the dining parlour, a glass case containing six small diaries written by a young lady who had met Jane Austen on Jane's visits to her brother, Edward Austen, in Kent. Recently with the kind permission of the Society's Vice-President and

Chairman, and the cooperation of the staff at the Museum, we transcribed the diaries, and a copy of our transcription is now kept there.

The writer of the diaries was Caroline, the youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Pym Hales, who had died before Caroline's first birthday. She lived at Dene, not far from Canterbury, with her mother, her four sisters and her half sister and half brother. Lady Hales had been a widow, Mrs Coussmaker, before her marriage to Sir Thomas Pym Hales.

At the start of the first diary, 1788, Caroline was fifteen years old, and she recorded, in minute writing, mostly the small day-to-day events of her own and her family's life. She records the weather, the health of her family, the daily walking out to visit friends and the more formal visiting with Mama in the coach. She notes down the balls and her own, and her sisters' partners, the races and cricket matches which they attend at Bourne, Sir Horace Mann's residence. Naturally she takes a keen interest in her sisters' marriage prospects. She shares the consternation when a proposal of marriage is received by sister Jane from a very recent acquaintance. "Jane was astonished at it . . . We talked of little else." There is surprise when a young man, who had been paying court to Caroline herself, is rumoured to be about to marry somebody else. "I own I was rather surprised when I first heard it after what he said to me the last time I saw him." Every year they go to London for the Season, and in May 1791 Caroline is presented at Court. "I was very much frightened and it was very crowded."

Caroline was not concerned to record the important national or political events of the troubled times in which she lived, although during the years of the last two diaries, when she was in her late twenties and the wife of an Army Officer, the Hon. William John Gore, who was away on active service, the wars intruded cruelly into her private life. However, occasionally she was moved to write about important national happenings, when, for instance, she notes the illness of George III, and the celebrations and rejoicings at his recovery in the Spring of 1789. "There were very fine illuminations at Canterbury and a great dinner at the Fountain Inn for all the gentlemen. Mama drove about the town to see it all on her way home."

Names familiar to readers of Jane Austen's letters find frequent mention in the diaries—Bridges, Knights, Hattons, Papillion (Caroline always inserts a second i), Harveys, Milles, Knatchbulls, and, in London, Mr Spence the dentist, whom Caroline visited in 1788 and 1789, and where Jane Austen accompanied her nieces years later.

To admirers of Jane Austen it will be Caroline's references to the authoress as a girl which must be of greatest interest, and we are obliged to say that in this respect there is bound to be disappointment, although we know that the two young ladies were acquainted. In one of Jane Austen's letters written in 1796 from Rowling, Edward Austen's home, not more than a mile from Caroline's home, Jane writes, "Lady Hales with her two youngest daughters have been to see us", and it is obvious that they had met before. Unfortunately Caroline's diary for that year has not been preserved with the others.

In the diaries of 1791 and 1792 Caroline makes about forty references to Mr. and Mrs. Austen, but on nearly every occasion the reference is clearly to Edward Austen and his wife Elizabeth, nee Bridges. There are two references to a Miss Austen. On 30 June 1792, "Mrs. Cage and Mrs. and Miss Austen came here in the morning and we walked out a little". On 5 July 1792, "Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Austen dined here and stayed the evening. The Austens were so good to ask Harriet and I to stay with them next week while Mama etc., are at Lees Court." and during that stay, "Mr. Austen and I played at Backgammon every evening." A few days later, "The whole family of the Austens" dined at Dene, and on 21 July, "The four Austens dined here and staid all the evening." She does not record for posterity whether it was Jane or Cassandra, or possibly both, with whom she visited, walked out, and dined, that Summer. It is tantalising not to find a direct, unmistakable, reference to Jane Austen in the diaries.

The year 1800 was a tragic one for Caroline. For months on end she had had no news of her husband, abroad on active service. She had lost her adored small son after vaccination, and, less than two weeks later, her baby daughter as well. December however, saw her husband's unheralded safe return, and on December 14th they left Dene, sleeping at Sittingbourne that night, breakfasting at Rochester next morning, and arriving in London at 4 o'clock.

So the last diary closes, ending the fascinating glimpse which it gives us into the private life of a young woman nearly two hundred years ago.

R. A. and C. I. Baldwin

White Soup

Speaking of the projected ball at Netherfield, (*Pride and Prejudice*, chap. XI) Mr. Bingley says: "As soon as Nicholls has made white soup enough, I shall send round my cards."

The Committee of the Jane Austen Society received an enquiry from Mrs. Jacobs as to the nature of white soup, and why it should take an unusual time to prepare: they were unable to

answer it, and Mrs Jacobs herself was able at last to supply the information which she gained from Mrs Jane Grigson, whose book *English Food* is in a Penguin edition. Mrs Grigson mentions two or three cookery books which would have been available to the Austen family, which contain recipes for white soup. She kindly sent the following one, from Mrs Rundell's *Domestic Cookery, by a Lady*, issued by John Murray, in the early 1800s. Mrs Grigson added: "I think you will see, from the enclosed recipe, why the house-keeper needed a few days' notice to provide white soup on a large scale."

An excellent white soup.

Take a scrag of mutton, a knuckle of veal after cutting off as much meat as will make collops, two or three shank bones of mutton nicely cleaned, and a quarter of a pound of very fine, undressed, lean gammon of bacon, with a bunch of sweet herbs, a piece of fresh lemon peel, two or three onions, three blades of mace and a dessertspoonful of white pepper; boil all in three quarts of water, till the meat falls quite to pieces. Next day, take off the fat, clear the jelly from the sediment and put it into a saucepan of the nicest tin. If macaroni is used, it should be added soon enough to get perfectly tender, after soaking in cold water. Vermicelli may be added after the thickening, as it takes less time to do. Have ready the thickening, which is to be made as follows: — Blanch a quarter of a pound of sweet almonds and beat them to a paste in a marble mortar, with a spoonful of water to prevent their oiling; mince a large slice of dressed veal or chicken and beat with it a piece of stale white bread; add all this to a pint of thick cream, a bit of fresh lemon peel and a blade of mace in the finest powder. Boil it a few minutes; add to it a pint of soup and strain and pulp it through a coarse sieve; this thickening is then fit for putting to the rest, which should boil for half an hour afterwards.

Jane Austen and Sussex

By Edmund Atkinson

Jane Austen's name is usually associated with Hampshire. She was born at Steventon in 1775, where her father was rector, she lived at Chawton for eight years, where she wrote or revised her major novels, and she died at Winchester in 1817. She also spent a good deal of her time at Bath, and staying with her brother Edward at his estate, Godmersham Park, in Kent. But she is not generally connected with Sussex, although there are at least 19 references to the county in the novels, and seven in her letters. Beachy Head, Battle, which she spells Battel, Hailsham and Willingdon all appear, while the county as a whole is found three times in the *Juvenilia* and once in *Sense and Sensibility*.



Eastbourne from Vicar's Hill, 1785 (*Painting by S. H. Grimm*)

In the letters references are less common. Worthing and Brighton are mentioned three times each, and Horsham is noted fleetingly in a journey from Chawton to London.

Let us consider the novels first of all. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Kitty is talking to Mr Bennet. "I am not going to run away, Papa; if I should even go to Brighton, I would behave better than Lydia."

"You go to Brighton! I would not trust you so near it as East Bourne, for fifty pounds."

And again, Lydia to Elizabeth. "They are going to be encamped near Brighton", (she is referring to the ————shire regiment). "and I do so want Papa to take us there in the summer. It should be such a delicious scheme."

"Yes," thought Elizabeth, "that would be a delightful scheme indeed, and completely do for us at once. Good Heaven! Brighton, and a whole campful of soldiers to us, who have been overset already by one poor regiment of militia, and the monthly balls of Meryton." But, unfortunately, no visit of the Bennet family to Brighton materialised; the description by Jane's satirical pen of the "campful of soldiers" is a masterpiece lost to posterity.

Lydia, however, went to Brighton, with dire consequences. Downcast at the departure of the regiment from Meryton for Brighton, she thought how nice it would be if she could have some sea-bathing there. "A little sea-bathing would set me up for ever," she said. But Mr Bennet was "so disagreeable," he would not think of going to Brighton, and it was finally left to Mrs Forster, the wife of the Colonel of the regiment, to invite Lydia to accompany her to Brighton. Mrs Forster was "a very young woman and very lately married," and Lydia and she appear to have had such a busy social life that she had hardly time to write. "Her letters were always long expected and always very short." Then came the distressing news that Lydia had eloped from Brighton with Wickham, and the town passes out of the story. They had left "On Sunday night." But all was well in the end. Owing to the good offices of Mr Gardiner and Mr Darcy the couple were found, and were married in London at St Clements, and departed soon after to the bridegroom's new regiment at Newcastle.

In *Mansfield Park*, Maria Bertram and her bridegroom, Mr James Rushworth, apparently planned to spend part of their honeymoon at Brighton. "The plan of the young couple was to proceed after a few days to Brighton, and take a house there for some weeks ———— and Brighton is almost as gay in winter as in summer. Julia was to go with them," (according to the custom of the time, the bride's sister often accompanied the bride on the honeymoon). Later in the book, Mrs Norris urges William

Price to visit influential friends in Brighton from Portsmouth, where he is stationed as a midshipman in the Navy. William observes, "I should be very happy, but Brighton is almost by Beachey (sic) Head", (in fact it is 21 miles away), "and if I could get so far, I could not expect to be welcome in such a smart place, poor scrubby midshipman that I am."

We are not told if Maria and James enjoyed their stay in Brighton, and we can sympathise with William Price in his refusal. Portsmouth in 1811 was a long way from Brighton for an impecunious midshipman, but Mrs Norris never thought of things like that.

But it is really *Sanditon* which engages the attention of Sussex readers. This masterpiece is, alas, a mere fragment of 24,000 words, or about one-fifth the size of a full length novel, begun in January 1817 and laid aside the following March, by which time the authoress was too ill to continue. She died the following July.

Sanditon is a little village on the Sussex coast, somewhere "between Hastings and East Bourne". It is being developed by Mr Thomas Parker, who, with a partner, has begun to lay it out with a Front equipped with Bathing Machines and a Terrace of houses facing the sea; he has built an hotel, a Library and a billiard room, and is hoping to attract visitors. It is famous for its fine air and its sea bathing, and Mr Parker waxes lyrical about its claims—"The finest, purest sea breeze on the Coast—acknowledged to be so—excellent bathing—fine, hard sand, deep water 10 yards from the shore—no mud—no weeds—no slimy rocks—Never was there a place more palpably designed by nature for the resort of the invalid—the very spot which thousands seemed to need—the most desirable distance from London!" A little later, Mr Parker and his family arrive home, and the novelist describes Sanditon in detail, "They were now approaching the Church and real village of Sanditon, which stood at the foot of the Hill they were afterwards to ascend—a Hill whose side was covered with the woods and enclosures of Sanditon House and whose height ended in an open Down where the new buildings might soon be looked for. A branch only of the valley, winding more obliquely towards the sea, gave passage to an inconsiderable stream and formed, at its mouth, a 3rd habitable division, in a small cluster of Fisherman's Houses. The village contained little more than cottages, but the spirit of the day had been caught, as Mr Parker observed with delight, and two or three of the best of them were smartened up with a white curtain and 'Lodgings to Let'."

From this description it is easy to recognise Old Eastbourne, the "real village," nestling under the Downs, which are partly wooded at this point, with St Mary's Church, and the river

Bourne, from which the place took its name, such an "inconsiderable stream" even today that it is carried underground as a sewer, running down to the sea and the fisherman's houses. At this time, 1817, Eastbourne, 1½ miles from the sea, was beginning to extend itself to the coast, and a few houses were appearing at Seahouses and Meads, although the great development of the place into a fashionable resort was to come later in the century under the aegis of the Duke of Devonshire. I think, making allowances for the licence permitted to an authoress and her imagination, we can say with a certain amount of assurance that Sanditon is indeed Eastbourne. This view is borne out by the fact that Mr Parker had sprained his ankle, in a carriage upset at Willingdon, although Jane spells it Willingden, and he considered the best way home would be to turn the horses round and find their way back to the Turnpike, and proceed to Hailsham, which was only two hours from home. Sussex readers will not need to be reminded that Willingdon is three miles and Hailsham eight miles from Eastbourne.

It is, perhaps, worth mentioning here that Sussex as a county appears three times in the *Juvenilia*, and *Sense and Sensibility* opens with the information, "The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex," but there is no further mention of the county and all the places are imaginary.

And so to Mr Gell. Jane read in the newspapers of the marriage of Mr Gell of Eastbourne to Miss Gill. They have been immortalised in this youthful set of verses:

Of Eastbourne, Mr Gell
From being perfectly well
Became dreadfully ill
For the love of Miss Gill.
So he said with some sighs
"I'm the slave of your eyes.
Oh! restore if you please
By accepting my ease."

Turning now to the letters, references in them are scarcer than in the novels. Writing to her sister Cassandra from Steventon on 8 January 1799, Jane says, "I assure you that I dread the idea of going to Brighton as much as you do, but am not without hopes that something may happen to prevent it." This is not very flattering and her hopes were fulfilled, but on 23 September 1813, again writing to her sister, she is more complimentary: "A letter from Mrs Cooke" (her 2nd cousin). "they have been at Brighton a fortnight, stay at least another, and Mary is already much better." The air of Brighton seems to have done Mary good, but we are not told whether the cure was permanent.

From a letter of 24 August 1805 to Cassandra we gather that



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE from the GARDEN.

W. L. Borden del. and sculp.

British Museum

there was an idea that the family should spend some weeks at Worthing. "Little Edward is by no means better," she writes, "and his papa and mama have determined to consult Dr. Wilmot. Unless he recovers his strength beyond what is now probable, his brothers will return to school", (Winchester), "without him, and he will be of the party to Worthing." Edward, aged 11, was Jane's nephew. She need not have worried on account of his health. He died in 1879, aged 85.

She writes on 30 August 1805, "The journey to London is a point of the first expediency, and I am glad it is resolved on, though it seems likely to injure our Worthing scheme," and, in the same letter, "We shall not be at Worthing so soon as we have been used to talk of, shall we? This will be of no evil to us." There is now a gap of almost a year and a half in the sequence of the surviving letters, so we have no means of knowing whether the Worthing "scheme" came off or not.

Lastly, a pretty little reference to Horsham. Jane, writing on 20 May 1813, to Cassandra, describes, very interestingly, a journey by curricule from Chawton to London. They took 3½ hours to Guildford, and, after breakfast at the inn (unnamed), they had a little stroll. "From some views which that stroll gave us," she writes, "I think most highly of the situation of Guildford. We wanted all our brothers and sisters to be standing with us in the bowling green, and looking towards Horsham." I expect she was visiting the Castle grounds.

Jane Austen loved her Hampshire, enjoyed Kent, sometimes criticised Bath, and made Sussex the setting for the novel which might have proved to be her masterpiece. We cannot expect much more.

The Austens and Oxford: "Founder's Kin"

Jane Austen's father Rev. George Austen won in 1747 a scholarship from Tonbridge School to St John's College, Oxford, where he took his B.A. in 1750 and M.A. in 1754, and was Proctor in 1759 before taking Holy Orders in 1760. His sons James and Henry too held scholarships at St. John's, but as a result not solely of academic prowess but also of the fact that through their mother Cassandra Leigh they were "founder's kin", i.e. they were akin to the founder of St John's College, Sir Thomas White (not directly, Sir Thomas being childless, but by descent from his sister Mary).

At St John's and other Oxford colleges applicants for scholarships and fellowships tracing their descent from the founder would formerly be preferred to applicants of equal scholastic attainments not so descended. The "founder's kin" system was introduced into the University of Oxford with the founding of

Merton College in the late thirteenth century, Walter de Merton, the founder, considering the giving of preference to members of his family in applications for scholarships to be merely a measure of justice. "Having deprived them by his foundation of some large part of their prospective inheritance, he sought to provide them with some compensatory benefit" (G. D. Squibb, *Founder's kin*, Oxford 1972, p. 7). A similar arrangement was made by William of Wykeham when founding New College in 1379, and by Sir Thomas White in his statutes for St. John's College, made in 1566 and later. This institution of "founder's kin" was primarily an Oxford phenomenon; no founder of a Cambridge college seems to have provided for the education of his kinsmen (although the founders of fellowships &c. at existing colleges often did so).

Applicants for founder's kin scholarships &c. had to provide a pedigree establishing their kinship with the founder. James Austen's pedigree is preserved in St. John's College (Mun. LIV/45); he matriculated as scholar in 1779, took his B A in 1783 and M A in 1788, subsequently becoming a Fellow of his college. Henry Austen matriculated similarly as scholar in 1788, taking his B.A in 1792 and M A in 1796.

James and Henry Austen collaborated in the publication of a weekly periodical, *The Loiterer*, which ran for 60 issues, from 31 January 1789 to 20 March 1790. The London distributor from No. 5 onwards was the firm of Egerton of Whitehall (the connection thus established may partly explain the later choice of this firm as Jane Austen's first publisher). Sir Zachary Cope, writing in *The Book Collector* 15 (1966), pp. 143-151, has suggested that a letter purporting to be by one Sophia Sentiment published in the 9th issue of *The Loiterer*, 28 March 1789, may have been written by Jane Austen herself; the writer says "For my part, I never, but once, was at Oxford in my life, and I am sure I never wish to go there again—They dragged me through so many dismal chapels, dusty libraries, and greasy halls, that it gave me the vapours for two days afterwards". We know that Jane accompanied her sister Cassandra to Oxford in about 1781 or 1782 to spend some time in the care of a Mrs Cawley, widow of a Principal of Brasenose College and sister of Dr Edward Cooper, Mrs. Austen's brother-in-law; did James Austen, at that time an undergraduate, inflict on his sisters too long and enthusiastic a tour of the colleges?

Three sons of Jane Austen's brother Francis were also members of St. John's College, presumably also as "founder's kin": Henry Edgar (1811-1854, matriculated 1829, B A 1833); George (1812-1903, matriculated 1830, B A 1834, M A 1837); and Edward Thomas (1820-1908, matriculated 1842, B A 1846, M A 1850).

The nineteenth-century reformers of Oxford included in the Oxford University Act of 1854 clauses doing away with the privilege of "founder's kin", not without much opposition from those so privileged. G. D. Squibb (*op. cit.*, p. 119) tells how "a petition against the clauses that would authorise the abolition of their privileges was presented to the House of Commons by thirty-five of the kindred of Sir Thomas White, the founder of St John's, including Charles Edward Austen-Leigh, one of the Committee Clerks of the House" (1832-1924, grandson of James Austen, who had been a member however, not of St John's but of Balliol); but in 1861 the privileges of Sir Thomas White's kindred were finally abolished.

Jane Austen's nephew James Edward Austen [-Leigh] (1798-1874) was a member not of St John's College but of Exeter College, where he matriculated in 1816 as a Craven Scholar (presumably in part as a result of his kinship with John Lord Craven through his mother Mary Lloyd); he took his B.A. in 1820 and M.A. in 1826. His fourth son Arthur Henry (1836-1917), though a member of Balliol College, was a Fellow of St John's between 1859 and 1876.

The Austen family connection with St John's College thus survived the abolition of the founder's kin privileges, and has been commemorated in the present century by the bequest to the college in 1939 by Miss Mary Isabella Lefroy (great-granddaughter of James Austen) of five autograph letters from Jane Austen to her niece, James's daughter Anna (Nos. 95, 98, 100, 101 and 107 in Dr Chapman's edition), and by the gift in 1940 by another great-granddaughter, Miss Louisa Langlois Lefroy, of the original of Rev. George Austen's letter of 1 November 1797 to the publisher Cadell, offering for publication the first version of *Pride and Prejudice*.

David Gilson

Note. My thanks are due to Mr Charles Morgenstern, Assistant Librarian of St John's College, for much of the information given above.

Jane Austen's House, Chawton. Books acquired 1977

Presented by Miss Helen Lefroy:

Lefroy, Fanny Caroline. *Hannah Lavender; or, Ladyhall* London: S.P.C.K., 1857.

[Lefroy, Fanny Caroline?]. *Mrs. Boss's niece*. London: J. & C. Mozley, 1855.

Lefroy, Jane Anna Elizabeth. *The winter's tale: to which is added Little Bertram's dream*. London: James Burns, 1841.

Lefroy, Jane Anna Elizabeth. *Springtide*. London: James Burns, [1842].

All four volumes formerly belonged to George Benjamin Austen Lefroy (1818–1910) son of Jane Anna Elizabeth Lefroy and brother of Fanny Caroline Lefroy.

Presented by Miss Mary Corringham:

Helm, William Henry *Jane Austen and her country-house comedy*. London: Eveleigh Nash, 1909.

Presented by the publishers:

Halperin, John & Kunert, Janet. *Plots and characters in the fiction of Jane Austen, the Brontës, and George Eliot*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books; Folkestone: Wm. Dawson & Sons Ltd., 1976.

Hickman, Peggy. *A Jane Austen household book, with Martha Lloyd's recipes*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1977.

Llewelyn, Margaret *Jane Austen: a character study*. London: William Kimber & Co. Ltd., 1977.

Marsh, Honoria D. *Shades from Jane Austen*, written and illustrated by Honoria D. Marsh. London: Parry Jackman Limited, 1975.

Jane Austen's Clerical Connections—A Correction

I am grateful to Mr. G. P. Hoole of Tonbridge for correcting details of the earlier career of the Rev. George Austen. The passage on page 12 of last year's Report should read: . . . "From 1754 until Lady Day 1757 he combined his Fellowship at St. John's College, Oxford with the post of Perpetual Curate of Shipbourne in Kent and with duties as Second Master at his own old School at Tonbridge. In 1758 he was back at Oxford. Until 1754. . . ." I am also grateful to Miss Winifred Midgley of Farnham for the beginning of a correspondence which is shedding light on the Rev. Henry Austen's career as Curate of Farnham and Master of the Grammar School there. It looks as if he continued those duties for a while after his appointment to Bentley in 1824.

William Jarvis

Cassandra Austen to Anne Sharp

Following the mention in last year's *Report*, p. 7 of a letter written by Cassandra Austen to Anne Sharp on Jane Austen's death (formerly in the collection of the late Mrs A. H. Burke and now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York), the kindness of Mr. Herbert Cahoon (Curator of Autograph Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library) enables us to reproduce the manuscript of this letter, of which the text follows (first printed in *The Times* of Monday 1 February 1926, p. 13):

My dear Miss Sharp

I have great pleasure in sending you the lock of hair you wish for, & I add a pair of clasps which she sometimes wore & a small bodkin which she had had in constant use for more than twenty years. I know how these articles, trifling as they are, will be valued by you & I am very sure that if she is now conscious of what is passing on earth it gives her pleasure that they should be so disposed of.—I am quite well in health & my Mother is very tolerably so & I am much more tranquil than with your ardent feelings you could suppose possible. What I have lost, no one but myself can know, you are not ignorant of her merits, but who can judge how I estimated them?—God's will be done, I have been able to say so all along, I thank God that I have.—If any thing should ever bring you into attainable distance from me we must meet my dear Miss Sharp.—

Believe me very truly

Yr affect^le friend

Cass. Elizth Austen

Chawton July 28th [1817]

My dear Miss Sharp

I have great
pleasure in sending you the
lock of hair you wish for, &
I add a pair of cloths which she
sometimes wore & a small
bottles which she had had in
constant use for more than
twenty years. I know how
these articles, trifling as they
are, will be valued by you
& I am very sure that if
she is now conscious of what
is taking on earth it gives her
pleasure that they should be

so disposed of. - I am quite
well in health & my Mother is
very tolerably so &c. I am much
more tranquil than with your
ardent feelings you could suppose
possible. What I have lost,
no one but myself can know,
you are not ignorant of her
merits, but who can judge how
I estimated them? God's will
be done, I have been able to
say so all along, I thank God
that I have. - If any thing
should ever bring you into at-
tainable distance from me
we must meet my sea.

Miss Sharp. —
Believe me very truly
Yr affctd friend
Capt. Wright Ansten
Chewton July 28th

Miss Sharp

Autograph letter from Cassandra Ansten to Anne Sharp, 28 July 1817
(Pierpont Morgan Library, New York)

Notes on Auction Sales

1975-July 1977

A. Manuscripts. Autograph letters by Jane Austen now very rarely appear on the market, but a particularly important one was sold at Sotheby's on 24 June 1975, Lot 270: the letter of 1 April 1816 to the publisher John Murray (No. 127 in Dr. Chapman's edition), commenting on Sir Walter Scott's review of *Emma* in the *Quarterly Review* and on the Prince Regent's reception of his presentation copy of that novel. This letter (a single quarto sheet, written on one side only) was sold for £2,400.

Two major literary manuscripts have been sold at auction. On 14 December 1976 the autograph manuscript of *Volume the Third* was sold at Sotheby's, Lot 172, £30,000, and on 6 July 1977 the autograph manuscript of *Volume the Second* was sold, also at Sotheby's, Lot 298, £40,000 (the latter manuscript is now in the British Library).

B. First editions. A copy of the first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811 was sold at Christie's on 2 July 1975, Lot 149 (as the property of Earl Amherst, bound in contemporary half calf, with no half-titles), for £230; other copies have been sold as follows: Phillips, Son, & Neale, 20 January 1976, Lot 236, calf gilt, no half-titles, £260; Christie's, 2 June 1976, Lot 2, contemporary half calf, no half-titles, £190; Sotheby's, 19 July 1976, Lot 259, Dr. R. W. Chapman's copy, contemporary quarter calf gilt, no half-titles (and with other defects), £140; Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, 6 October 1976, Lot 7, from the Katharine de Berkeley Parsons collection, brown morocco, with half-titles, \$700.

A copy of the first edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1813, Lot 235 at Phillips, Son, & Neale on 20 January 1976, in calf gilt, with half-titles, sold for £340, whereas Dr Chapman's copy, in contemporary mottled calf gilt, with no half-titles and with various defects, Lot 261 at Sotheby's on 19 July 1976, brought £120. Another copy, Lot 204 at Sotheby's on 18 October 1976, bound in early 20th century polished calf gilt, with the genuine half-title only in Vol. 2 (and with a copy of the half-title from Vol. 3 of the second edition added to Vol. 1), sold for £260.

First editions of any of the novels in original paper boards are now very rare. A particularly interesting copy of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814 in this state was Lot 145 at Sotheby's on 24 May 1976 (complete with original paper spine labels, half-titles and the advertisement leaf at the end of Vol. 3, it came from the library of Prince Ludwig Joseph Max Starhemberg (1762-1833), Austrian Ambassador in London between 1793 and 1807, and in 1809) and was sold for the high price of £1,000.

Bound copies have been sold as follows: Phillips, Son, & Neale, 20 January 1976, Lot 238, calf (one spine defective), no half-titles, £240; Sotheby's, 23 February 1976, Lot 1, contemporary half calf, no half-titles or advertisement leaf, bookplate of Earl Bathurst, £170; Sotheby's, 19 July 1976, Lot 262, contemporary half calf (re-backed, preserving original spines), no half-titles or advertisement leaf, Dr Chapman's copy, £130; Sotheby's, 26 July 1976, Lot 233, contemporary half green calf, no half-titles but with the advertisement leaf, £220; Christie's, 18 May 1977, Lot 2, 19th century morocco, with half-title only in Vol. 1, no advertisement leaf, £50.

A copy of the first edition of *Emma* 1815 was sold at Sotheby's on 5 May 1975 (Lot 85, bound in calf, re-backed, with a half-title only in Vol. 2) for £160; other copies have been sold as follows: Phillips, Son, & Neale, 20 January 1976, Lot 234, calf gilt, no half-titles, £260; Sotheby's, 19 July 1976, Lot 264, contemporary calf gilt, re-backed, with two half-titles in Vol. 1 (one at the end—it was in fact printed as part of the last sheet—and one at the beginning, presumably inserted in error from another copy), Dr Chapman's copy, £110; Christie's, 2 February 1977, Lot 118, contemporary half calf re-backed, with all half-titles, £350; Christie's, 18 May 1977, Lot 1, contemporary half morocco, re-cased, lacking the half-title to Vol. 1, £160.

A particularly interesting copy of the first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818 in original paper boards was sold by Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, on 6 October 1976, Lot 8, from the Katharine de Berkeley Parsons collection. This copy, skilfully re-backed (retaining original paper spines and spine labels) originally belonged to the Prince Regent's librarian, Rev. James Stanier Clarke (who showed Jane Austen round Carlton House in 1815 and corresponded with her over the dedication of *Emma* to the Regent); it has his signature in the first volume, and was sold for \$800. Bound copies have been sold as follows: Sotheby's, 19 May 1975, Lot 176, contemporary half calf, £200; Phillips, Son, & Neale, 3 June 1975, Lot 15, calf gilt, re-backed, £160; the same firm, 20 January 1976, Lot 237, calf, no half-titles, £180; Sotheby's, 19 July 1976, Lot 265, contemporary quarter green calf gilt, with half-titles, Dr Chapman's copy, £200; Christie's, 2 February 1977, Lot 119, contemporary cloth (an unusual binding), with all half-titles, £230; the same firm, 18 May 1977, Lot 3, contemporary half red straight-grained morocco, no half-titles, £280; Sotheby's, 25 July 1977, Lot 252, contemporary half calf, with half-titles, some defects, £280.

C Other material Lot 223 at Sotheby's on 31 January 1977 was an interesting association item: a handsome set of *The Spectator*, 8 vols., 1775, 8", bound in contemporary polished calf, with the signatures "James Austen. Steventon" and "W. F. Digweed,

Steventon, 1835" in each volume. The set was sold for £75.

David Gilson

Note My thanks are due to the respective auctioneers, especially Messrs Christie's and Sotheby's, for permission to extract these details from their sale catalogues. It is hoped that these notes will be an annual feature, recording sales in each auction season (October to July).

Jane Austen Studies, 1977

Batey, Mavis "In quest of Jane Austen's 'Mr. Repton'", *Garden History: the Journal of the Garden History Society* 5 (1977), 19-20.

Cockshut, Anthony Oliver John *Man and woman: a study of love and the novel, 1740-1940*. London: Collins, 1977. pp. 221. Chapter 4, pp. 54-71, is devoted to Jane Austen.

Crum, Margaret *English and American autographs in the Bodmeriana: catalogue compiled by M. Crum*. Cologny-Genève: Fondation Martin Bodmer, 1977. pp. 104. p.17: description of a manuscript, verses by Jane Austen and other members of her family (Lot 191 at Sotheby's on 29 October 1962).

Dry, Helen. "Syntax and point of view in Jane Austen's *Emma*", *Studies in Romanticism* 16 (1977), 87-99.

Eagle, Dorothy & Carnell, Hilary *The Oxford literary guide to the British Isles*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977. pp. 413. Contains extensive references to Jane Austen and places associated with her.

Fido, Martin "A note on Jane Austen's use of *cross*", *English Studies* 58 (1977), 230-231.

Gilson, David John. "Anna Lefroy and 'Mary Hamilton' ", *The Warden's Meeting: a tribute to John Sparrow*, Oxford: Oxford University Society of Bibliophiles, 1977, pp. 43-46.

Hickman, Peggy. *A Jane Austen household book, with Martha Lloyd's recipes*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1977. pp. 128.

Jane Austen Society *Collected reports 1966-1975, with an introduction by Elizabeth Jenkins*. Folkestone: Wm. Dawson & Sons Ltd., 1977. pp. 271.

Jane Austen Society *Report for the year 1976*. Alton: Jane Austen Society, [1977]. pp. 30.

Jefferson, Douglas. *Jane Austen's Emma: a landmark in English fiction* (Text and Context Series). London: Chatto & Windus Ltd. for Sussex University Press, 1977. pp. 89.

- Jenkins, Elizabeth "Jane Austen and the human condition", *Essays by Divers Hands* N.S. 39 (1977), 57-75.
- Kendall, D. G. "Jane Austen and 'Co-'", *Notes and Queries* 222 (1977), 277. The expression "Co-" in *Sanditon* (explained as "Co-heiress").
- Llewelyn, Margaret *Jane Austen: a character study*. London: William Kimber & Co. Limited, 1977. pp. 189.
- Lovell, Terry "Jane Austen and gentry society". *Literature, society and the sociology of literature: proceedings of the Conference held at the University of Essex, July 1976, edited by Francis Barker [and others]*, University of Essex, 1977, pp. 118-132.
- Malins, Edward "Humphry Repton at Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwickshire", *Garden History: the Journal of the Garden History Society* 5 (1977), 21-29. On the newly-discovered "Red Book" for Stoneleigh, 1809, and Repton's work there for Mrs. Austen's cousin Rev. Thomas Leigh.
- Müller, Wolfgang G. "Gefühlsdarstellung bei Jane Austen", *Sprachkunst* 8 (1977), 87-103.
- Noel-Bentley, Elaine "An allusion to *Sir Charles Grandison* in Jane Austen's letters", *Notes and Queries* 222 (1977), 321. The character James Selby is mentioned in Letter 39, 14 September 1804.
- Pascal, Roy *The dual voice: free indirect speech and its functioning in the nineteenth-century European novel*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977. pp. 150. Pp. 45-60 are devoted to Jane Austen's use of free indirect speech.
- Schapera, Isaac *Kinship terminology in Jane Austen's novels*. (Occasional Papers, 33). London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1977. pp. 24.
- Shipp, Anthony W. "Jane Austen's minor works", *Notes and Queries* 222 (1977), 48. A source for the motto to *Love & Freindship* ("Deceiv'd in friendship and betray'd in love").
- Skilton, David *The English novel: Defoe to the Victorians*. (The Comparative Literature Series). Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1977. pp. 200. Pp. 80-90 are devoted to Jane Austen.
- Vipont, Elfrida *A little bit of ivory: a life of Jane Austen*. London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1977. pp. 148. For younger readers.
- Zeman, Anthea *Presumptuous girls: women and their world in the serious woman's novel*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977. pp. 185. Discusses Jane Austen in the company of women novelists from Fanny Burney to Margaret Drabble.

David Gilson

Jane Austen on the Symptoms of Love

Address given by Dr Juliet McMaster
at the Annual General Meeting

I'm going to begin by quoting Shakespeare's Rosalind, when she rebukes Orlando for looking so unlike a lover. The proper marks of a lover, she insists, are

A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and a sunken, which you have not; . . . a beard neglected, which you have not, but I pardon you for that. . . . Then your hose should be ungarter'd, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbutton'd, your shoe unti'd, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man; you are rather point-device in your accoutrements.

A lover, according to Rosalind, wears a uniform, by which you may know him. And Rosalind sets herself up as an expert on the subject of love, and cheerfully undertakes its diagnosis and cure.

For the moment I want to emulate Rosalind, and take it upon myself to explore some of the scholarship on love, and some of the dramatisations of it, because Jane Austen, like Shakespeare in his comedies, makes love and the conventions surrounding it her subject. It is not just an emotion among others, it is a topic for debate, and for informed and playful commentary. I must warn you now that it may take me a little while to get to Jane Austen. But I promise you that I will get to her presently. Meanwhile, I hope you will bear with me in a swift consideration of the Renaissance convention of love as Jane Austen inherited it. The subject, after all, has its own intrinsic interest.

Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Dr Johnson said, "was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise."¹ Jane Austen is likely at least to have browsed in the favourite book of her favourite author; but she need not have known *The Anatomy of Melancholy* to have been familiar with much of the lore it contained. Many of the conventions and physical aberrations discussed in the fascinating section on "love melancholy" are still with us, as commonplaces of the behaviour of the lover. But I use Burton as my textbook, as he usefully collects the copious information on the subject.

Love melancholy is sexual love considered as a disease. "They that are in love are likewise sick," Burton states categorically.² The love malady has its physical causes and symptoms, its proper treatment and cure; and, if untreated, it is acknowledged as likely to end in death or madness. "Go to Bedlam for examples," says Burton succinctly.

To speak first of its causes: if you are of a sanguine temperament—that is, if blood predominates over the other humours of your body—you are the more likely to fall victim to the love disease. A rich diet, strong wines, and a leisurely life, which promote the flux of blood, are added dangers. “Lascivious meats” and “noble wine first of all,” says Burton, promote desire, and he adds one of his catalogues of inflammatory foods: “Honey mixtures, exquisite and exotick Fruits, Allspices, Cakes, Meat-broths, smoothly powerful wine . . . who would not then exceedingly rage with lust? Inflammation of the belly is quickly worked off in venery, Hierome saith. After benching, then comes wenching.” Hence the modern lecher’s refrain, “Have some Madeira, m’dear.”

Sanguinity, youth, idleness and a rich diet create the predisposition to love. But the infection itself strikes from the sight of the beloved. When Phebe, Shakespeare’s rather soppy shepherdess, quotes Marlowe, “Who ever lov’d that lov’d not at first sight?” she is presenting the orthodoxy of the day. (By the way, Phebe, like another zealous advocate of first attachments, Marianne Dashwood, marries not her first love but her second.) Love happens all at once, it strikes like a thunderbolt, and it happens on sight of the beloved. The meeting of the eyes is the crucial moment: from one pair of eyes to the other streaks a beam, or a ray, something that is conventionally represented as having a physical force, like Cupid’s arrow; and then the victim is a goner. “Angry Cupid, bolting from her eyes,/Hath shot himself into me like a flame,” moans Volpone. “Even so quickly may one catch the plague?” Olivia wonders in *Twelfth Night*; “Methinks I feel this youth’s perfections,/With an invisible and subtle stealth/To creep in at mine eyes.” “The more [the lover] sees her,” moralises Burton, “the worse he is; the sight burns . . . the rays of love are projected from her eyes.” This love, “first learned in a lady’s eyes,” is an infection that proceeds, Burton says, through the vital spirits to the liver, heart, and finally the brain, so that it preoccupies appetite, passion and reason.³ The progress to Bedlam has begun.

And now we come to the symptoms. On first taking the infection the lover stands bemused, he sighs, he is struck speechless, or if he speaks he speaks disconnectedly. The signs of falling in love become so formalised, in fact, that in one play Marston simply supplied the stage direction “[*Isabella falls in love*],” and left it to the actor to represent the condition to the audience’s satisfaction.

Things go from bad to worse. The lover is sleepless. His pulse is uneven. After his indulgence in food and drink that made him prone to take the infection, he fasts. His total absorption in his love makes him affect solitude; his infected reason

makes his speech fragmentary; his interrupted respiration makes his breath come in gasps and sighs. Not surprisingly, he becomes pale and thin. Pallor is the badge of love—"Let everyone that loves be pale, for lovers 'tis the the proper colour," Burton lays it down. Jacques Ferrand, author of a learned seventeenth-century work called *Erotomania*, further explains, "We must not understand by this word pale a simple decloration or whiteness of the skin . . . but rather a mixed colour of white and yellow; or of white, yellow and green."⁴ Viola in *Twelfth Night* is therefore quite accurate in describing the state of her "sister" who died of love:

She pin'd in thought
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat, like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.

Those last lines, by the way, are among the tags from Shakespeare that Catherine Morland commits to memory.

It is necessary to distinguish between two forms of the love disease, the sanguine and the melancholic.⁵ If the lover's suit is successful, his sanguine symptoms will continue, and he will blush and sing and be gay, and though he will be irrational in the idolatry of his beloved, his will not be a dangerous case for the physician. But the lover whose love is scorned turns from sanguine to melancholic; his blood corrupts to melancholy; and his sleeplessness and fasting wreak havoc with his constitution. Chaucer's Squire, with his embroidered tunic and cheerful music-making, is the sanguine lover; but Arcite, in the Knight's Tale, is the pattern for the melancholic lover:

His sleep, his mete, his drinke, is hym biraft,
That lene he wex, and drye as is a shaft;
His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde,
His hewe falwe, and pale as asshe colde,
And solitarie he was and ever allone,
And wailing al the nyght, making his mone.

In Jane Austen's novels, Mr Elton is the type of the sanguine lover, with his fine display of symptoms, his blushing, sighing, and the charade on courtship, his own version of the classic lover's "ballad made to his mistress' eyebrow." And Captain Benwick, at least before his cure, is Jane Austen's Arcite: he has "a melancholy air, just as he ought to have, and drew back from conversation."

According to the prosperity, or otherwise, of his love, the lover's symptoms will vary. The careless desolation in dress, for instance, which Rosalind cites as the proper uniform of the lover, belongs to the melancholic phase of the disease. Had Rosalind had *The Anatomy of Melancholy* to hand, though, she

might have been consoled to read, "let them never be so clownish, rude and horrid, Grobians and sluts, if once they be in love, they will be neat and spruce." We, as an audience knowledgeable in the scholarship on love, can appreciate that Orlando is point-device in his accoutrements because his love is in fact a very prosperous one. He sees his beloved every day, though he does not know it. It is the kind of happy irony that Jane Austen loved as well as Shakespeare.

The symptoms in the classic lover's behaviour are manifold. If he really wants to do the thing properly he will wear a broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, and carry his arms folded. It is thus that the "Inamorato" is represented in the frontispiece to *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. So in *Love's Labour's Lost* Moth advises Don Armado that if he wants to convince discriminating wenches that he is in love he must appear "with your hat penthouse-like o'er the shop of your eyes; with your arms crossed on your thin-belly doublet like a rabbit on a spit." Hence Berowne, another of Shakespeare's experts on love, calls Cupid "Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms." Compulsive versifying is also among the symptoms. "I do love, and it hath taught me how to rhyme," admits Berowne.

The lover becomes particularly sensitive to the name of his beloved. Either, like Orlando, he mouths her name constantly; or, like Jane Austen's lovers, he can hardly bring himself to pronounce it at all.

Her picture is likewise sacred, and may prompt all the symptoms displayed on the first sight. By showing a portrait the crafty physician may often diagnose a love malady, even if the patient is anxious to keep his love a secret. Proteus, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, resolves to content himself with a picture instead of its original. He tells Silvia,

Madam, if your heart be so obdurate,
Vouchsafe me yet your picture for my love . . .
To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep.

But the lover will doat not just on the portrait of the beloved, but on any image—such as a likeness perceived in the countenance of a relative; or on any relic—such as a lock of her hair; or even, like Harriet Smith, the stub of a pencil or a piece of court plaister.

The lover's total absorption in his love makes him hypersensitive to the presence or approach of the loved one. "A lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind," says Berowne. "She looks out at window still to see whether he come," confirms Burton. An updated Burton would include among his examples Elizabeth Bennet at the window of Longbourn, desecring before anyone else the figure of Darcy, and Anne Elliot in Bath, who can pick Wentworth out in a crowd at the far end of the street.

The physician who undertakes to cure a patient of the love disease can most easily treat the physical symptoms. His cures will correspond with the causes. To remedy the lover's sanguinity, bleed him,—the treatment of love was frequently a pretty gory business; to remedy his inflammatory rich diet, starve him; to remedy idleness, exercise him. One doctor, André Du Laurens, advises briskly, "Take away idleness, take away belly cheere, and quaffing of strong drinks, and without doubt lechery will fall stark lame."⁶ One can easily imagine why many a patient felt the cure was worse than the disease. And indeed this rather rigorous treatment, added to the symptoms of the melancholic lover, can bring the patient close to death's door. At this point, Burton advises humanely, "If they be much dejected and brought low in body, and now ready to despair through anguish, grief, and too sensible a feeling of their misery, a cup of wine . . . is not amiss."

But there are other cures, which have their different advocates. "I profess curing [love] by counsel," says Rosalind. The cure by good counsel involves the forceful representation of the irrationality of the patient's passion and of the defects of his beloved. But physicians admit that it seldom works. It's a sign that Elizabeth Bennet is not very far gone in love with Wickham that she takes her aunt's advice in such good part—"a wonderful instance," we hear, "of advice being given on such a point, and not resented."

More efficacious is what Burton calls the cure by "contrary passion,"—"a new love thrusteth out the old" he quotes. But that can mean out of the frying pan, into the fire—like Romeo cured of Rosaline by Juliet, or Harriet Smith cured of Robert Martin by Mr Elton.

"The last and best cure of Love-Melancholy," admits Burton at last, "is, to let them have their desire." This may sound more like a total surrender to the disease than a treatment, but the wise physician is ready to consider marriage as a prescription in order to free the lover from his pathological and irrational state of mind. Conjugal love is right and reasonable, and is offered as a sovereign cure to make "amantes no more amentes"—lovers no more madmen. So the physician and the comic dramatist unite in the final prescription of marriage, and many a successful case history, like many a romantic comedy, ends in a celebration of Hymen.

Jane Austen, like Shakespeare, both made fun of the love convention and used it. The earlier works, particularly, are full of high-spirited satire of all the commonplaces of love. Mr Adams in *Jack and Alice* is "of so dazzling a Beauty that none but Eagles could look him in the face." Alice, who is of a red complexion and often "heated by wine" is overpowered by "the

Beams that darted from his Eyes," and instantly falls in love. In *Evelyn* the deserted Maria is "so much grieved at [her husband's] departure that she died about 3 hours after." And the two heroines of *Love and Freindship* between them neatly fulfill the prognosis of the uncured love disease—Laura runs mad and Sophia dies (after imprudently fainting on the wet grass). The young Jane is showing that she really shares Rosalind's sceptical doctrine: "Men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love." All this is good fun. But Jane Austen is ready to take love and its accepted conventions seriously too, to create her own Juliets and Cleopatras. In *Marianne Dashwood* she presents a girl who is so locked in to the convention that she almost postures herself to death; and our sympathies are fully engaged with Fanny Price and Anne Elliot, who suffer long and poignantly from the pangs of despised love.

The novels can be read as commentaries on the various controversies within the subject of love. **Do** men die for love? **Did** anyone ever love that loved not at first sight? **Is** love blind? and so on.

Isabella Thorpe, who does all her *Love and Friendship* by the book, assures Catherine, "So it always is with me; the first moment settles every thing. The very first day that Morland came to us last Christmas—the very first moment I beheld him—my heart was irrecoverably gone." But Isabella's heart proves to be more recoverable than she claims. *Pride and Prejudice*, with its theme of the unreliability of First Impressions, continues to reject the love-at-first-sight convention in the main plot, but in the subplot of Bingley and Jane we have something close to the romantic pattern: "Oh, she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld!" exclaims Bingley at the first ball; and all might have proceeded simply to swift marriage, but for outside interference.

"Love is blind" is a proposition that is similarly debated. Cupid's blindness is supposedly communicated to the lover, who, on being smitten by the arrow, loses his power to see the defects of his beloved. Marianne, a vigorous adherent to the doctrine, "honoured her sister for her blind partiality" in not seeing Edward's shortcomings. And we know that when Sir Walter Elliot loses sight of Mrs. Clay's freckles, he is far gone indeed. The whole of *Emma* is an exploration of the question of judgement and partiality in the lover. Emma's own conviction that love is blind is the source of many of her blunders: if Mr. Elton can talk of Harriet's "ready wit" he **must** be in love; on the other hand, since Mr. Knightley proves himself so thoroughly cognisant of Emma's faults, he must be in love with someone else.

Though Shakespeare and his contemporaries used the love convention, they were also so aware of its conventionality that

they sometimes sought to express love in unconventional terms: so they created what we might call the anti-convention convention. "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun," declares this revolutionary in the realm of love. He rejects the convention in order to achieve a new immediacy, a greater authenticity in his expression. *Sense and Sensibility*, I think, is an extended essay in this genre. Marianne's is the conventional love, conceived at first sight, prompting heady joys and excessive manifestations, leading to desperation and almost to death. Elinor's is the love that is restrained in its expression, and hence it is invested with that quiet energy that Shakespeare and Wyatt achieve in their anti-Petrarchan lyrics. It is a dangerous game to play, as we can see when Marianne's histrionic displays capture our sympathy instead of Elinor's intense reticence. But it can succeed. In the novels at large, I think, Jane Austen does achieve a kind of muted intensity that can be as moving as, say, Charlotte Brontë's more overtly passionate novels.

So Jane Austen debates again the old issues, and makes her own statements in the various branches of the subject of love.

We hear of Mrs Dashwood at the beginning of *Sense and Sensibility* that "No sooner did she perceive any symptom of love in [Edward's] behaviour to Elinor, than she considered their serious attachment as certain." Mrs Dashwood is only one of a number of characters in the novels who are on the lookout for symptoms of love. And the symptoms are there all right, external signs, legitimate evidence that may be perceived and interpreted by the attentive observer. It is one of the conveniences of the love convention that it externalises emotion, and so enlarges the action, the working out of a love between two people, beyond the principals.

The accurate diagnosis of love is of major import in the plots of Jane Austen's novels. Consider *Pride and Prejudice*, for example. Bingley and Jane fall in love, and Bingley makes no secret of his admiration. When Jane is convalescing at Netherfield, "He was full of joy and attention. The first half hour was spent in piling up the fire, lest she should suffer from the change of room. . . . He then sat down by her, and talked scarcely to any one else. Elizabeth saw it all with great delight." Elizabeth later speaks as a skilled diagnostician of love: "I never saw a more promising inclination. He was growing quite inattentive to other people, and wholly engrossed by her. . . . At his own ball he offended two or three young ladies, by not asking them to dance, and I spoke to him twice myself, without receiving an answer. Could there be finer symptoms? Is not general incivility the very essence of love?" Mrs Bennet and her cohorts are exultant, perceiving by such signs that Bingley is almost caught. But Darcy has been on the watch too. "I observed my friend's

behaviour attentively; and I could then perceive that his partiality for Miss Bennet was beyond what I had ever witnessed in him." Darcy regards Bingley's attachment to a girl of such connections as scarcely short of an illness, and he takes on the task that in Burton's day would have been the physician's, a cure of the love malady by good counsel: "I readily engaged in the office of pointing out to my friend the certain evils of such a choice.—I described, I enforced them earnestly." However, as a man of honour Darcy wants to be sure Jane won't suffer. He brings his diagnostician's eye to bear on her too:

Your sister I also watched. Her look and manners were open, cheerful and engaging as ever, but without any symptom of peculiar regard, and I remained convinced by the evening's scrutiny, that though she received his attentions with pleasure, she did not invite them by any participation of sentiment.

Elizabeth at first doubts he has really taken pains to deduce Jane's feelings, but presently remembers that his testimony is corroborated by Charlotte Lucas, who had noted Jane's apparent serenity with uneasiness. Indeed, Bingley would not have been cured by Darcy's good counsel alone, but the assurance of Jane's indifference does end his courtship; at least until his physician, who has meanwhile been smitten by the same malady, prescribes the final cure—"to let them go together" and be married.

So the love of Jane and Bingley, which in itself would be a matter private to themselves, radiates outwards, by means of the external signs of love, to become a matter hotly at issue between the novel's two main characters and among their friends. And the moral judgement on Darcy and Elizabeth depends to some extent on their skill as diagnosticians of love.

The novels abound with such characters. Mrs Jennings in *Sense and Sensibility* is one of the liveliest, though not always the most discriminating. "She was full of jokes and laughter, and before dinner was over had said many witty things on the subject of lovers and husbands." "She was remarkably quick in the discovery of attachments, . . . and this kind of discernment enabled her soon after her arrival at Barton decisively to pronounce the Colonel Brandon was very much in love with Marianne Dashwood." (Not bad, Mrs Jennings!) In her benevolent enterprise "to marry all the rest of the world," Mrs Jennings is a precursor of Emma, the character in all the novels who most prides herself in her skill in the diagnosis, cure, and promotion of love. Emma even contemplates "a Hartfield edition of Shakespeare," where she intends to dispute the proposition that "The course of true love never did run smooth." She presides, of course, mainly over Harriet's love life: she cures her by good counsel of her love for Robert Martin, talks her into love with

Mr Elton (and then finds she can't talk her out again so quickly), and benignly tolerates her symptoms of love for Frank Churchill. Besides that, she is quick to discover Jane Fairfax's illicit passion for Mr Dixon (Mr Dixon, after all, admired Jane's piano-playing more than his fiancée's—nothing could be clearer!) Emma gets it all wrong, of course. She misreads the symptoms, but the symptoms are there, and Mr Knightley is attentive enough to discover something of the secret loves of Jane and Frank.

Some of the women in the novels are put to the pain of diagnosing the symptoms in the men they love themselves. Fanny must watch Edmund's growing love for Mary Crawford, and Anne Elliot must speculate on the degree of attachment between Wentworth and the Musgrove girls: "Other opportunities of making her observations could not fail to occur. Anne had soon been in company with [them] often enough to have an opinion . . . that Captain Wentworth was not in love with either. They were more in love with him; yet there it was not love. It was a little fever of admiration; but it might, probably must, end in love with some." Anne's skill is such that she can make these minute discriminations accurately.

For a character like Marianne, falling in love is as immediate and perceptible as for a figure in Renaissance comedy. The process is, after all, laid down in advance. When Willoughby rescues her, and carries her off, sprained ankle and all, to her home, she blushes profusely, is unable to speak, and, as soon as she casts an eye on his manly beauty, she is convinced that "of all manly dresses a shooting-jacket is the most becoming." But other heroines do not have such ready access to their own emotions. Elizabeth and Emma are unconsciously in love with Darcy and Knightley before they ever detect themselves in the fact, and both even imagine themselves in love with other men. Everyone knows that even the best doctors are poor practitioners in their own cases, and so with such patients it is the reader who must become the diagnostician.

We, like Mrs Jennings and the others, must read for symptoms. It is one of the great pleasures of reading the novels—much more fun than combing for clues in a whodunnit. Emma, reflecting on the iniquities of Mrs Elton in a long soliloquy, thus takes her own pulse: "Oh! what would Frank Churchill say to her, if he were here? How angry and how diverted he would be! Ah! there I am—thinking of him directly. Always the first person to be thought of! How I catch myself out!" The close reader, however, by looking back to the beginning of the soliloquy, will note that the "first person to be thought of" was actually Mr Knightley, not Frank Churchill at all.

So it is with Elizabeth, who thinks she hates Darcy. In

observing other lovers she is shrewd enough: when she meets Bingley in Derbyshire she can see the symptom of his lasting feeling for Jane: "Once or twice [she] pleased herself with the notion that as he looked at her, he was trying to trace a resemblance." But it is left to the reader to catch Elizabeth in the act of displaying the same symptom herself when she meets Lady Catherine, "in whose countenance and deportment she soon found some resemblance to Mr Darcy." In learning to read such signs the reader becomes a latter-day anatomist of love, and at least as well qualified to edit a new edition of Burton as Emma to edit the Hartfield edition of Shakespeare.

The reader on the lookout for symptoms might at first glance suppose that Jane Austen is above the rather quaint Renaissance conception of love as a physical state. Burton's diatribes on sanguinity, diet, and the state of the liver seem rather far-fetched for useful application to nineteenth-century novels. But the old physiology of love is still perceptible, even if only in a vestigial form. Mr Elton, well dined and wined at the Randalls dinner, is equally well primed for love-making: "two moments of silence being ample encouragement for Mr Elton's sanguine state of mind, he tried to take [Emma's] hand again." "Sanguine" is a term used here in a sense Burton would surely have approved, as well as in our more modern sense of "hopeful." The view that amorousness is determined by physical makeup is partly confirmed by the physique of Jane Austen's most susceptible girls. Notice that the ones who are likely victims of seducers are robust: Lydia is "stout, well-grown, . . . with a fine complexion" and "high animal spirits," the largest of the Bennet girls although the youngest. Georgiana Darcy, Wickham's other intended victim, is "tall, and on a larger scale than Elizabeth; and, though little more than sixteen her figure was formed, and her appearance womanly." The Bertram girls, both susceptible to the charms of Henry Crawford, are "tall, full-formed and fair." And Marianne, who resembles Colonel Brandon's fallen first love, is taller than Elinor, with a complexion "uncommonly brilliant."

Burton's strictures on diet, too, still reverberate. It is surely no accident that Mr Woodhouse is equally opposed to a rich diet and to matrimony! And Mrs Jennings may well have used *The Anatomy of Melancholy* as her Home Doctor volume, for when Marianne has been deserted by Willoughby she presses her to take a glass "of the finest old Constantia wine," trusting in "its healing powers on a disappointed heart." She evidently remembers Burton's recommendation for dejected lovers: "a cup of wine . . . is not amiss."

Though the gloomy prognosis of death or madness is not fulfilled in Jane Austen's realistic novels, she does often show how a disappointed passion can have serious physical consequences. Marianne is a classic case of love melancholy. "It was many

days since she had any appetite, and many nights since she had really slept . . . The consequence of all this was felt in an aching head, a weakened stomach, and a general nervous faintness." In her illness at Cleveland, which is almost fatal, her pulse is "lower and quicker than ever!" and she is feverish and delirious. Men who are crossed in love, like Edward Ferrars, Colonel Brandon, and Captain Benwick, generally give themselves away by showing "oppression of spirits";—even Mr. Knightley loses his physical vigour when he supposes Emma is about to marry Frank Churchill, and prompts the sad comment from his nieces and nephews, "Uncle seems always tired now." But the women are more definitely debilitated. Anne loses her bloom as well as her spirits when she breaks her engagement; Fanny's sick headache has as much to do with Edmund's attentions to Mary Crawford as with her picking roses in the sun; Jane Fairfax in Frank's absence suffers from "a weakened frame and varying spirits." After their quarrel she is actually a case for the doctor. "Her health seemed for the moment completely deranged—appetite quite gone—. . . her spirits seemed overcome." Hers is a malady that Burton would recognise as being beyond any treatment but the last and final cure of marriage, which happily is forthcoming. As Mrs. Elton says knowingly, "Upon my word, Perry has restored her in a wonderful short time! . . . we shall not say a word of any assistance that Perry might have; not a word of a certain young physician from Windsor. [That is, Frank.]—Oh! no; Perry shall have all the credit." As for Frank himself, he claims—and means to be believed—that if Jane had refused him, "I should have gone mad." Fortunately however the same sovereign remedy keeps him out of Bedlam.

The Renaissance convention of the force of the eyes, the exchange of looks between lovers, remains a strong influence in the novels. We hear much of the attractive power of the heroine's eyes on the hero—Catherine's "sparkling eyes" as she accepts Tilney's invitation to dance; "the beautiful expression of her dark eyes" that overcomes Elizabeth's other disadvantages in Darcy's estimation; Mary Crawford's "lively dark eye" that so charms Edmund, until he learns "to prefer soft light eyes to sparkling dark ones"; and Emma's "true hazle eye" that makes Mr. Knightley "love to look at her." A good deal of significant action in the novels takes the form of exchanges of glances between lovers or would-be lovers. When Mr. Elton presents his charade, which plays conventionally, "May its approval beam in that soft eye!" Emma knows there are signs to be read, but misreads them; "There was deep consciousness about him, and he found it easier to meet her eye than her friend's." ("Of course he does, Emma!"—we feel like shouting, "because it's you he's courting, not her!") In other places, however, Emma can manage the *coup d'oeil* with some finesse—as at the ball

with Mr Knightley, where "her eyes invited him irresistibly to come to her."

In *Persuasion* there is a whole history of looks between lovers. The estrangement between Anne and Wentworth is emphasised by their failure to meet each other's eyes: "Her eye half met Captain Wentworth's"—or—"Once she felt that he was looking at herself." Only at Lyme, where she begins to recapture his attention, does she receive "a glance of brightness" from him; and at the last he places his letter of proposal before her "with eyes of glowing entreaty." "A word, a look will be enough to decide," he writes. And when they meet, in Union Street, Anne is able to give him the right look. The progress of their relation is marked by averted eyes, intercepted glances, and at last by the full exchange of loving looks.

I must proceed to a swift catalogue of the more obvious of the behavioural symptoms that Jane Austen's lovers display. Here I plunge into a welter of detail, because I think it's necessary to read closely for this kind of evidence. But I'm sure your own memories will supply many more instances than those I quote.

In dress we have Marianne again as the conventional model, demonstrating the careless desolation of the melancholy lover: "To her dress and appearance she was grown . . . perfectly indifferent"—unlike Miss Steele who, always in hope to catch the next beau, is point-device in her accoutrements. There are no broad-brimmed melancholy hats in evidence; but Harriet is able to see in "the very sitting of his hat . . . proof of how much [Mr Elton] was in love!"

Mr Elton, who much enjoys the trappings of a lover, is likewise a heavy sigher. Even Emma, delighted as she is at his promising attachment to Harriet, becomes almost exasperated: "He does sigh and languish, and study for compliments more than I could endure as a principal." And the attentive reader who attunes his ear to sighs may gather almost as much as the one on the lookout for dialogues of eyes. Similarly, pallor and blushing are signs by which we can deduce volumes of emotional history.

It is of course *de rigueur* that the dedicated lover, like Chaucer's Squire, should "sleep namore than dooth a nightingale." "Marianne," we hear, "would have thought herself very inexcusable had she been able to sleep at all the first night after parting from Willoughby." Isabella Thorpe proudly exclaims to Catherine, "Oh, Catherine, the many sleepless nights I have had on your brother's account!" So when Elizabeth, after her visit to Pemberley, "lay awake two whole hours" trying to determine what are her feelings for Darcy, the reader could tell her the answer

there and then, on the basis of the insomnia alone. (You might as well admit it, Elizabeth,—you're in love.)

Shakespeare's pastoral lover, Silvius, makes unsociability and the courting of solitude a definitive symptom of love: "if thou hast not broke from company,/Abruptly, as my passion now makes me./Thou hast not loved . . . (*Exit*)."

So Elizabeth lays it down, "Is not general incivility the very essence of love?" It takes Marianne several days, after Willoughby's departure, to bring herself to walk with her sisters "instead of wandering off by herself"; and it is on one such solitary ramble that she contracts her putrid throat. Fanny and Anne Elliot, both of whom are divided from their men through most of the action, are alike also characterised by their loneliness: for Anne, as for Fanny, "her own thoughts and reflections were commonly her best companions." Indeed, the noticeable need of the heroine at times of stress to withdraw, and cope with her feelings in private, is Jane Austen's characteristic adaption of the conventional lover's penchant for solitude. As Jane Fairfax says feelingly, after she has quarrelled with Frank, "Oh, Miss Woodhouse, the comfort of being sometimes alone!"

Viola in *Twelfth Night* is able to discover that Olivia has fallen in love by the fact that "she did speak in starts distractedly." Broken and confused speech is likewise a reliable symptom of love in Jane Austen's novels. Darcy's feelings for Elizabeth are deducible from his unconnected sentences and relapses into silence when he calls at the parsonage in Hunsford. Mr Elton is again a model lover when he looks at Emma's painting and "sighed out his half sentences of admiration just as he ought." And even Henry Tilney can be inarticulate: on his visit to the Allens after his proposal, "he talked at random, without sense or connection."

The time-honoured relation between the lover and the picture of his beloved is the basis of many a subtle incident involving pictures in Jane Austen's fiction. An early instance, in *Evelyn*, is the sad story of Rose Gower, who after losing her fiancé at sea, seeks "to soften her affliction by obtaining a picture of her unfortunate Lover." The same incident recurs, with subtle expansion to include the question of constancy in men and women, in *Persuasion*, where Benwick's picture, painted for Fanny Harville, is to be reframed for his new fiancée, Louisa Musgrove. Elizabeth at Pemberley re-enacts the classic lover's reaction to the portrait, but in a movingly updated version. She wanders through the gallery until she finds what she is looking for, Darcy's portrait:

At last it arrested her—and she beheld a striking resemblance of Mr Darcy, with such a smile over the face, as she remembered sometimes to have seen, when he looked at

her. She stood several minutes before the picture in earnest contemplation.

Burton would have signed her up for emergency treatment at once.

The complex muddle over Mr Elton's admiration of Emma's portrait of Harriet shows that Emma has got her conventions confused. Mr Elton is determined to be a conventional lover, and Emma is determined to read the conventional signs. But he is flashing the "Everything you do is perfect" sign, while Emma is receiving the "Lover doats on portrait" message. Hence she takes Harriet to be his object, not herself. It is a beautiful play with the love convention.

The sound of the name of the beloved can be almost as dangerous as his picture or his actual presence. Elinor helps Marianne in her extremity by avoiding the mention of Willoughby: "Her carefulness in guarding her sister from ever hearing Willoughby's name mentioned, was not thrown away." Catherine, as she is expelled from Northanger Abbey, stammers to Eleanor Tilney "'her kind remembrance for her absent friend.'" But with this approach to his name ended all possibility of restraining her feelings." Such reaction being the convention, sharper ladies than Catherine become self-conscious about the matter. Mary Crawford writes to Fanny in Portsmouth, "Of [your cousin Edmund], what shall I say? If I avoided his name entirely, it would look suspicious." And Emma, always taking her own temperature to measure her love for Frank Churchill, goes through this palpitating soliloquy:

Am I unequal to speaking his name at once before all these people? Is it necessary for me to use any roundabout phrase? . . . No, I can pronounce his name without the smallest distress. I certainly get better and better.—Now for it . . . Mr. Frank Churchill writes one of the best gentlemen's hands I ever saw.

(Of course you can pronounce his name without distress, Emma, you ridiculous girl! You've never cared two straws about him!)

Except for Mr. Elton's charade, the lover's inclination to versify is not abundantly demonstrated in Jane Austen's novels. In fact Elizabeth satirically suggests that writing poetry is the cure of love, rather than its symptom. "I wonder who first discovered the efficacy of poetry in driving away love!" she says, anticipating the unromantic view of her descendant, Thackeray, who similarly suggested, "when a gentleman is cudgelling his brain to find any rhyme for sorrow, besides borrow and tomorrow, his woes are nearer at an end than he thinks for." But an indulgence in music is still a proper activity for a lover, and Marianne, in playing over all the songs she has sung with

Willoughby, is like that other orthodox lover, Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, who exclaims, "If music be the food of love, play on!"

"But," says Burton, as he is struggling to an end of his section on Symptoms, "I conclude there is no end of love's Symptoms, 'tis a bottomless pit." Emma, another expert on the subject, likewise acknowledges, "There must be a hundred different ways of being in love"—though she is pretty sure she is mistress of them all.

I proceed then to the cures—where again Jane Austen follows the traditional precedents. I'm afraid that a pretty close scrutiny of the novels has furnished me no instance of letting blood as a treatment of the love malady. But as I have said, Mr. Woodhouse undertakes to cure all and sundry by a strict course of dieting before they ever sicken. The cure by good counsel is attempted on Catherine Morland by her mother, on Bingley by Darcy, on Harriet by Emma (more than once), and on Anne by Lady Russell. It never works. The cure of the contrary passion is confirmed as more successful. Mrs Jennings professes this cure, and almost quotes Burton: "one shoulder of mutton, you know, drives another down"; and indeed her prescription is successful, as Marianne is ultimately cured of Willoughby by Brandon. A "second attachment," we are told, would be "the only thoroughly natural, happy, and sufficient cure" for Anne's wounded heart, but that she manages to resuscitate the first attachment. And successive attachments are the only treatment for Harriet's almost chronic state of lovesickness: "The charm of an object to occupy the many vacancies of Harriet's mind was not to be talked away. [Mr Elton] might be superseded by another . . . but nothing else . . . would cure her." However, with Burton, Jane Austen finally prescribes the treatment of marriage, and a highly acceptable one it is. She, like Shakespeare, writes romantic comedies, after all.

A number of modern critics have shown us Jane Austen as the novelist of "regulated hatred," as the bitter satirist, as a writer with almost tragic reach. I have preferred today to dwell on her affinities with Shakespearean comedy, to remind myself, and you I hope, of Jane Austen as a novelist who also celebrates joy and consummation. For all her restraint in depicting sexuality, she can reach like Shakespeare to delight in love requited. "O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz," exclaims Rosalind exuberantly. "that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love!" We find similar jubilant, sparkling passages in the novels. "I am happier even than Jane," says Elizabeth; "she only smiles, I laugh." Or, when Wentworth agrees to escort Anne home in Bath: "There could only be the most proper alacrity, a most obliging compliance for public view; and smiles reined in and spirits dancing in private rapture.' How many fathom deep they are in love!

Jane Austen's romantic comedies are close to Shakespeare's not just in their playful treatment of the conventions of love, but sometimes in the deliberate choice of situations through which to explore the intricate pains and pleasures of love. Elizabeth Bennet, who "dearly loves a laugh," is kin to Beatrice in *Much Ado*, who was "born in a merry hour": both of them single out their men for pointed abuse before a happy reconciliation. Fanny Price is a latter-day Viola, constrained to the painful task of being the go-between in the suit of the man she loves for another woman. And Emma Woodhouse, who takes on the arrangement of other people's love lives while her own is in jeopardy, is a version of Rosalind.

"I believe in a true analogy between our bodily frames and our mental," says Captain Harville—a proposition which Anne, and Jane Austen too, accept. From the quaint old conception of the humours, the theory that character derives from physical constitution, Jane Austen inherited a sense that love is not just a state of mind, but also a state of body. To the intelligent observer its signs are as definite and palpable as a rash or a high temperature. For us moderns, who use what we call intuition to divine the state of each others' hearts, she would have a tolerant compassion—we are so many Mrs Dashwoods and unreformed Emmas, relying on inspired guesses that may just as likely be wrong as right. And those outward and visible signs of love serve her purpose as a novelist, too. The artist must deal in appearances, and the visible symptoms of love—its language, as it were—are a fine ready-made set of terms by which to communicate its reality. Jane Austen writes for a reader who is "in the lore/Of love deep learned to the red heart's core." The rather florid phrase is Keats's, but the sentiment fits. As her characters are scholars of love, so must we be.

NOTES

1. Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, entry under 1770. Oxford Standard Authors edition, 1961 reprint, p. 438.
2. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* was first published in 1621. I use the edition of Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York, 1927).
3. See André Du Laurens (Burton's "Laurentius"): "Love therefore having abused the eyes, as the proper spies and porters of the mind, maketh way for itselfe smoothly to glaunce along through the conducting guides, and passing without any preseverence in this sort through the veins unto the liver, doth suddenly imprint a burning desire to obtaine the thing, which is or seemeth worthie to be beloved, setteth concupiscence on fire, and beginneth by this desire all the strife and contention: but fearing herselfe too weake to encounter with reason, the principal part of the minde, same: whereof when she is once sure, as of the strongest she posteth in haste to the heart, to surprise and winne the same: where of when she is once sure, as of the strongest holde, she afterwarde assaileth and setteth upon reason, and all the other principall powers of the minde so fiercely, as that she subdueth them, and maketh them her vassals and slaves." *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight: of Melancholic Diseases; of Rheums, and of Old Age*, trans. Richard Surphlet (London, 1599). Reprinted, Shakespeare Association Facsimile no. 15. London, 1938. P. 118.
4. Jacques Ferrand, *Erotomania, or a Treatise discoursing of the Essence, Causes, Symptomes, Prognosticks, and Cure of LOVE or Erotique Melancholy* (Oxford, 1640), p. 121.
5. See Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabeth Malady* (East Lansing, 1951), p. 134.
6. Du Laurens, p. 123.
I use R. W. Chapman's edition of the novels.

"The Symptoms of Love" will also appear as the first chapter of Juliet McMaster's monograph, *Jane Austen on Love*, to be published in September, 1978, in the English Literary Studies monograph series. Copies at £2 may be obtained by writing to:

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Report for the year 1978

Membership

There were 122 new members during the year, of whom 33 became Life Members, as did 27 old members. There are now 1670 individual members, as well as 43 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £1 Annual Subscription, and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs. Edward Knight, on Saturday, 15th July, when about 480 members and their guests were present. Due to chaos at Waterloo Station, caused by a Pop Festival at Blackbushe, about 30 members missed the meeting.

Lord David Cecil presided. Opening the meeting he deplored the refusal of the Oxford University Press to reprint Dr R. W. Chapman's edition of *Jane Austen's Letters*. The minutes of the last Annual Meeting were taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Report for 1977. This was seconded by Mr J. Barrett and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts. He proposed that as from 1st January, 1979, Annual Subscriptions should be raised from 50p. to £1, and Life Membership from £10 to £15. He stated that the income from Annual Subscriptions and investments no longer covered the basic expenses of the Society. The motion was seconded by the Hon. Mrs John Mulholland, and carried.

Lt. Col. Walter Serocold proposed that Lord David Cecil be re-elected President, Mr John Gore, Vice-President, and Sir Hugh Smiley Chairman of the Society. This was seconded by Sir Charles Stirling and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The address was given by Dr Marilyn Butler, Fellow of St. Hugh's College, Oxford, who took as her subject 'Disregarded Designs: Jane Austen's Sense of the Volume'.

A vote of thanks was proposed by the Rev. R. W. Pilgrim seconded by Mr J. Butler-Kearney, and carried.

During the meeting members had been asked to sign a protest to the Oxford University Press regarding the reprinting of *Jane*

Austen's Letters. This, containing 400 signatures, was forwarded with a letter signed by the President.

The meeting was closed by the President thanking Major and Mrs Knight for lending Chawton House once more for the meeting.

Annual General Meeting 1979

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 21st July, when the President of the Society, Lord David Cecil, will give the address.

Jane Austen's Letters

The opening paragraph of the letter from the Oxford University Press, acknowledging the protest signed at the Annual Meeting, said 'How could the Press do other than agree to a re-issue of R. W. Chapman's edition of *Jane Austen's Letters*, faced as we are by the onslaught of 401 militant Janeites?'

They expect to publish in September, when the price will be £15. Two thousand copies will be printed.

Mr Michael Chapman, acting upon instructions left by his mother, has given to the Society Dr R. W. Chapman's copy of Sir Geoffrey Keynes' *Bibliography of Jane Austen*, inscribed *R. W. Chapman from Geoffrey Keynes, Sept. 1929*, and a sprig of muslin with a feather design.

Jane Austen's Topaz Cross

My discovery that the topaz cross fashioned of five oval stones was the one given to Jane Austen by her brother, Charles John Austen in 1801, began with the publication of Peggy Hickman's "A Jane Austen Household Book" in 1977, the title page of which showed a reproduction of a daguerreotype of Martha Lloyd recently acquired by the Jane Austen Society. As I wished to add a photograph of this daguerreotype to my collection of pictures of Jane Austen and her family, I obtained a copy, and on examining it with a magnifying glass I discovered that Martha Lloyd was wearing a jewelled cross identical with one of the two crosses, formerly belonging to Cassandra and Jane Austen, that were presented to the Jane Austen Society by Charles Beecher Hogan in 1974. This was later confirmed after the original daguerreotype had been examined.

As Cassandra Austen inherited all of her sister's effects at the time of the latter's death in 1817, presumably she presented Jane Austen's cross to their dear friend, Martha Lloyd, for Cassandra would hardly have given away her own cross. After the deaths of Cassandra Austen and Martha Lloyd (who had married

Admiral Sir Francis Austen in the meantime), the crosses were apparently returned to the family of Rear Admiral Charles John Austen, the original donor, whose descendants sold them in the 1920 s. If this hypothesis is correct, the cross fashioned of five oval stones that Martha Lloyd was wearing, belonged originally to Jane Austen.

George Holbert Tucker

After he had sent his article for publication in this Report, Mr Tucker discovered an article by Dr R. W. Chapman in The Times Literary Supplement of 14 January 1926. In this Dr Chapman lists the collection of manuscripts by and relating to Jane Austen recently dispersed by a branch of the family.

This includes the letter from Jane Austen to Cassandra, dated 26 May 1801, describing their brother Charles' gift of the crosses, and the crosses themselves. Dr Chapman says in the article that there was a family tradition that the larger of the two crosses was Jane's. This is the one identified by Mr Tucker.

Jane Austen in India

Jane Austen never visited India, nor did she make any significant reference to this country in her works or extant letters. Her novels, however, have been great favourites with Indian readers. In Universities in our country one of her novels is usually prescribed for study at the College or University level. Some of her novels have been reprinted in India, and three of them have been ably translated into Indian languages. *Pride and Prejudice* has been rendered into more than half a dozen languages, including Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, and Kannada; *Sense and Sensibility* has been translated into Bengali, and *Emma* into Tamil. All these "translations" were published after 1950. Much critical work on her novels has not been done in our country. There is a Jane Austen Society at Trichirapalli, (1967) South India, with L. C. Richard as its Secretary. But it appears that the society has not published anything. One may note some articles published in the *Indian Journal of English Studies*, University Research Bulletins and a few general essays which appeared in magazines like *The Modern Review*, and *The Mirror*. Only two doctoral dissertations on her work have been done in India : one at the Banaras Hindu Varsity, and the other at the Panjab University. The one studies Jane Austen's concept of social life, while the other offers a critical analysis of her woman characters. So far no book-length study of her work has been made in this country, although A. N. Kaul in *Action of English Comedy* (1970) has contributed an elaborate and perceptive chapter on her art.

One major cause of Jane Austen's appeal to an Indian reader is the predominance of what E. M. Forster calls "domestic

humour" in her novels. Jane Austen, like Elizabeth Bennet, never holds up "to ridicule what is wise and good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies do divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can." The source of her humour is "ridiculus," and it lies in situations which present a conflict between illusion and reality. Her attitude towards the evil-doers hardens in her later works. This perhaps accounts for the popularity of *Pride and Prejudice*, a novel which contains a fine combination of poetry of wit with the dramatic structure of fiction.

Some eminent critics find fault with the happy endings in her novels. G. B. Stern, for instance, comments on the finalé of *Emma* in this strain : "Oh, Miss Austen, it was a bad solution, an unhappy end, could we see beyond the last pages of the book." To some, the end seems ironic. Andrew Wright finds the new Emma slightly less amusing and more serious, whereas Angus Wilson laments over her "narrow outlook." However, the response of an Indian reader is radically different. To him, the ending is neither ironic nor unnatural. Since the story is largely seen through Emma's consciousness, he sympathises with her. Here is a marriage of virtue, goodness, judgement, taste, tenderness and beauty. Emma's self-revelation is partial, she may again, and probably will, commit such mistakes. But a truly perfect wife is boring to live with; so would be a truly perfect husband. An ideal wife should be intelligent but certainly less smart than her husband. The "perfect happiness of the union" provided at the end is both real and logical.

Jane Austen was a typical country woman with her characteristic views and tastes. She was fond of village life. Her family has recorded her love for the country families - pictures of domestic life in country villages : "3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work on," she observed to one of her nieces. This too makes her appeal to Indian readers. India comprises over half a million villages. To most readers here the rural way of life is a reality, a way within the compass of their own experiences. And the village life in the late eighteenth century England had something in common with the rural life in India in our age. Here readers follow the pattern of Jane Austen's novels. For example, they understand *Mansfield Park* in right perspective because Jane Austen associates good of all kinds with rural areas and bad of all kinds with London.

Jane Austen holds that small actions or gestures reveal adequately the nature of a person. In doing big things usually all people are alike. However, in doing small things persons, particularly women, are really themselves. It is the small things that go to make domestic life that she writes about. The small actions of omission and commission are important in a study of Austen's characters. She has rightly compared her art to a miniature painting on ivory, only two inches wide. In a miniature painting not

only the range is small, but the touches are also minute and neat. It is the small details that depict her characters adequately. The raw material used is commonplace and ordinary, and the novelist has a remarkable control over her material. So the readers accustomed to reading about big events or great situations in novels, find Jane Austen too much preoccupied with small and dull things, and to some, "of all great writers she is most difficult to catch in the act of greatness." However, to the readers of Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Kamala Markanday her technique is neither unfamiliar nor insipid.

Jane Austen's main preoccupation is with love and marriage which makes her works interesting. All her six novels are love-stories. Matrimony, existing or intended, constitutes the main situation in her novels. As a realist, she recognises the due importance of material gains in matrimonial alliances. In a letter she writes about the financial aspect of the prospective lovers : "As to money, that will come, you may be sure, because they can't do without it." She, however, favours love-marriages, and studies in detail the prerequisites of a happy marriage. If matrimony is a social as well as a family affair, mutual understanding, old acquaintances, identical tastes, friends, fortune, and reconciled parents are by no means insignificant considerations. Jane Austen approaches the subject from a woman's point of view, and in all novels, except in *Pride and Prejudice*, the marriages of the heroes and the heroines actually take place when all discordant elements, viz. parental wrath, lack of fortune or friends, etc. are done away with. This is largely compatible with the Indian view of marriage. As in Jane Austen, marriage in the same or known families is generally favoured in the rural areas here.

For Jane Austen an ideal marriage is the union of manly traits of man and womanly traits of woman. It is the union of a Darcy with Elizabeth Bennet, of a Wentworth with Anne Elliot, of a Knightley with Emma Woodhouse. In India this view is shared by many. In our famous national epic, *The Ramayana*, Lord Rama embodies manly virtues, whereas Sita represents feminine accomplishments. The same is true for Lord Krishna and Radha. Jane Austen's opinion of women is quite favourable and high. But she also thought men considerably competent and capable. her own brothers must have strengthened this conviction. Men like Mr Knightley, Mr Darcy and Captain Wentworth are lovely figures. According to the novelist, there is no clash between the sexes; each might shine in his or her own field. Whereas man's forte is strength, woman's is tenderness. Says Henry Tilney in *Northanger Abbey* : "In every power in which taste is the foundation, excellence is pretty fairly divided between the sexes"(Ch. 3). This view is in line with the traditional Indian outlook on man and woman.

Jane Austen studies at length young girls who are neither devils nor goddesses. She is often interested in the type of girl who does not try to substitute a false, romantic fictionalised view of life for actual experience. An ideal woman is honest, selfless, obliging and tender. Jane Austen's works can be read as the novelist's search towards a rational and amiable woman. In *Sense and Sensibility* her endeavour is to give sense to sensibility in the character-study of Marianne Dashwood. In Elizabeth Bennet she creates a sincere, straightforward and intelligent woman, a "rational creature speaking the truth from her heart." Here Jane Austen is nearest her goal. In *Northanger Abbey* Catherine Morland moves towards this ideal in the latter half of the novel. In Fanny Price the rational view develops slowly yet steadily. The movement from "vain spirit" to a "serious spirit" in Emma Woodhouse is a progress to the same aim. Anne Elliot, too, displays the outlook of a rational young woman, growing wiser after every experience. It is woman's womanly aspect that will win her lasting affection and admiration. Her heroines fascinate us because they embody this aspect so beautifully. In a joint-family various relationships are important. Her artistic treatment of parent-child, brother-sister, and sister-sister relationships make her novels attractive to Indian readers.

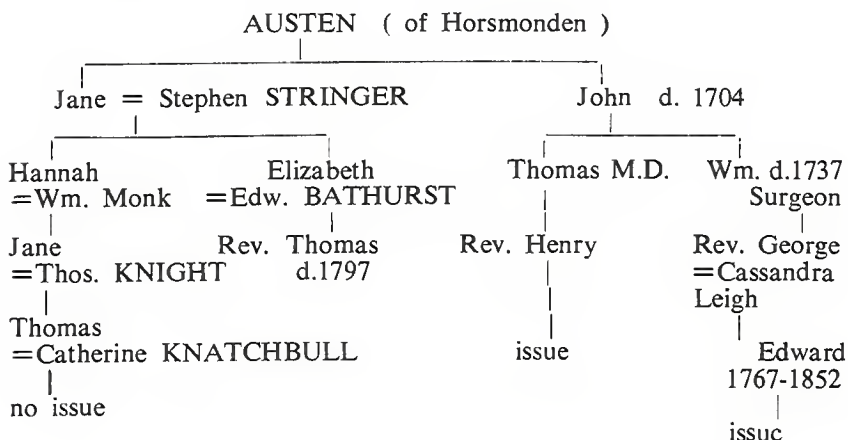
Modern Indian writers find Jane Austen interesting. Some of them described their response to her novels in their interviews with the present writer. Kamala Das enjoys her works because she is "interested in the social life of bygone years." Anita Desai was left cold when she first read Austen. However, she later "re-read her and found her exhilarating." To some Indian-English writers Jane Austen has a special significance. Shiv K. Kumar likes her works, though at times "She's too genteel, suave and sophisticated." Som Ranchan discovers "archetypal feeling structures" in her novels, and remarks, "Under the seeming surface much depths are astir." To Keshav Malik her writing is "splendid - free from all spurious intellectuality. Minus all affection." He regards her novels as a model in writing: "We of a later day, with our enormous load of clever learning could go to school with her sense and sensibility."

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The Rev. Thomas Bathurst

On the very first page of *The Life and Letters of Jane Austen* by W. and R. A. Austen-Leigh we are told that the Austens, the Bathursts and others had their ancestors among clothiers, "the Gray Coats of Kent." Some time ago, when I was speculating about the Rev. Thomas Bathurst, who was Curate at Steventon

from 1754 until the Rev. George Austen took up his duties there in 1764, I wish I had remembered this. I might have known that this Rev. Thomas had some connection with Kent! He was, in fact a cousin of the Rev. George, whose other cousin, the Rev. Henry Austen, had preceded him both at Shipbourne in Kent until 1754 and at Steventon from 1759 until 1761. It came about like this:-



Edward Bathurst, who died in 1772 aged ninety-two, had been a barrister, and came from Goudhurst. His son Thomas was educated at Trinity College, Oxford and became a Fellow of All Souls' in 1735. He seems not to have resided very frequently in Oxford; but during 1754, according to Visitation records at Winchester, he became Curate of Steventon, five years before his cousin Henry Austen became the Rector. I suspect that Henry seldom, if ever, set foot in Steventon. He was in fact also Curate at Chiddingstone, where the registers reveal him at work from 1753 until 1762. The new kind of Marriage register brought into use in 1755 required the signature of the minister; and this has helped in the locating of Henry and also the identification of Thomas. His last recorded act at Steventon was a marriage in 1763. In the next year George Austen arrived to take up his duties there; and on 1st June 1765 Thomas Bathurst was inducted into the valuable All Souls' living of Welwyn in Hertfordshire, where he succeeded Edward Young, the author of *Night Thoughts*. He seems never to have married, for when in 1772 he made his will, he left any possessions to Dorothy, the daughter of his elder brother Edward who had recently died in Jamaica. And this will was proved a little after the death of Thomas at Welwyn in 1797 at the age of eighty-two. He was buried in the parish church of Old Welwyn.

The partial family tree given above would, I think, have appealed to Jane Austen herself, who once wrote, "I like first Cousins to be first Cousins, & interested about each other." It also shows how the young Edward Austen, Jane's brother, came to be adopted by Thomas Knight as his heir at Godmersham and at Chawton.

William Jarvis

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David Gilson

The Revd Henry and Mrs. Eleanor Austen

Henry Austen was already in his mid-forties when he embarked on his third and final career, the Church, for which his parents originally intended him. Instead, he had chosen the Army, then on his marriage to his cousin, Eliza de Feuillide, he became a partner in a bank. In 1816, three years after his wife's death, the bank failed, leaving Henry bankrupt and penniless, for Eliza's dowry as well as his own money had been lost in the catastrophe. Fortunately, he was by nature extremely resilient and set about getting himself ordained without delay.

Dr. Chapman in "*The Letters of Jane Austen*" states that Henry "took orders and became curate of Bentley near Alton. Dec. 1816," and many subsequent writers have accepted this statement, without question. The facts, as recorded in the Acts Book (Bishops' Register) are these: he was appointed curate at Chawton, Dec. 26th 1816; Rector of Steventon, (on James Austen's death), Jan. 15th 1820; curate at Farnham, Aug. 1st 1822; Perpetual Curate at Bentley, April 6th 1824.

Henry was also for a time Chaplain to the British Embassy at Berlin. From a reference in one of James Austen's letters and the absence of Henry's signature from the Parish Registers for five months, it is reasonable to conclude that this appointment ran concurrently with the Chawton curacy.

Jane lived long enough to see her brother appointed at Chawton and she assured a nephew that he wrote "very superior sermons." There seems no doubt that this was not a sister's partiality. A Farnham sermon, and one given at Clifton, were both published, as were a series of lectures on Genesis which he gave when Embassy Chaplain at Berlin.

Henry's appointment as curate of St Andrew's Parish Church

AN EPITOME
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT,
IN THE FORM OF
QUESTION AND ANSWER,
WRITTEN FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE
Parish of Bentley,
And
DEDICATED BY PERMISSION
TO THE RIGHT REVEREND
THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER,

BY MRS. HENRY AUSTEN.

FARNHAM:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY NICHOLS & SONS; SOLD ALSO BY LONG-
MAN & CO. AND MESSRS. RIVINGTON, LONDON; J. COLLINGS,
AND MRS. DINNS, BATH.

1831.

Title page of Mrs Henry Austen's *Epitome*
(Jane Austen Memorial Trust)

at Farnham carried a salary of £75 "with surplice fees averaging £35 and Vicarage House, Garden and Offices. To reside in the Parish." This stipulation was necessary as the Vicar, Henry Warren, had been appointed Rector of Ashington, in Sussex, two years before he received the living of Farnham in 1799; Farnham was just within the "stipulated distance" of 30 miles for a non-resident priest but, with the condition of the Sussex roads at that period, Henry must, in effect, have been the acting Vicar for most of the time.

In 1822 Farnham was a town of some importance, dominated by the Castle, a residence of the Bishops of Winchester. The fine quality of the locally grown hops had brought prosperity to many but there was also considerable poverty and a full workhouse. To the care of a large church and his parishioners, Henry added in 1823 the superintendence of the ancient Free Grammar School. The scholars must have found him a welcome change from his predecessor, Dr. Samuel Locke, who concentrated on his private pupils and, according to tradition, refused to teach in the school at all.

In 1824, while still resident at Farnham, Henry was appointed Perpetual Curate at Bentley, a village some four miles distant. He had the assistance of a curate but was active there, most of the parish records being signed by him. In February 1827 he resigned from the Farnham curacy and his Mastership of the Free School and settled in Bentley, not retiring till July 1839.

Curiously little is known of Henry's stay in Farnham: even at the present day, few people seem aware of it. Yet Jane had been dead only five years and her reputation alone should have ensured his memory. We have a brief glimpse of him keeping his parishioners waiting at the ceremony of Beating the Bounds in 1823 when considerable horseplay occurred.

"At half-past seven commenced walking or perambulating the Bounds of the Parish.....having waited until this time for the Rev. Mr. Austin (sic) who then took the lead, supported on the right and left by the Churchwardens and Overseers.....the High Constable, Constables, Thos. Pisle the only tithingman presentand a numerous train of followers with white wands." The procession was accompanied by drums, bugles and fifes. Boys were "bumped" to make them remember the boundary marks and "the painting of faces was carried to too great an excess to the annoyance, and am sorry to say disgrace, but the body of young men were so numerous that it was impossible to prevent it and it continued until everyone was disfigured more or less."

At Bentley Henry spent much time and energy collecting funds for the enlargement of the church. The Bishop of Winchester and the Earl of Durham each subscribed £25 while Henry, out of his meagre resources, contributed £30 and obtained donations from

various relatives. In a letter to his Churchwarden he comments: "We have conquered the invincible. We have got money *out* of the Treasury", a remark which would have delighted Jane. He also secured the erection of a Cage for the drunk and disorderly, to replace the inhumane stocks and whipping post, again subscribing himself. Parson White of Crondall records that Henry took duty for him on an occasion in 1831 and during his mother's last illness he rode over to Chawton regularly to visit her.

Henry's movements between his retirement in 1839 and his death in 1850 are difficult to establish. He was present at Cassandra's funeral and his nephew, James Edward, wrote that he afterwards left for London and Leamington. His death, of gastritis, took place at Tunbridge Wells on March 12th 1850 and he was buried in the Woodbury Park Cemetery there. According to the Death Notice in the Gentlemen's Magazine, he was "late of Colchester."

Henry Austen was fortunate in both his marriages, though his two wives must have had very different temperaments. Eliza. Comtesse de Feuillide, his widowed cousin, was ten years his senior and had already discouraged the attentions of his staid brother James. The couple lived in London, in considerable style, being quite affluent with her dowry and the income from his then flourishing bank. They were both sociable, gave parties and showed much kindness to the impoverished French emigrés who had congregated in the neighbourhood.

Eliza died in 1813 and Henry did not re-marry till after Jane's death, though he seems to have considered at least one candidate during her life-time, whom Jane refers to as "the Hanwell favourite."

On 11th April 1820, while Rector of Steventon, Henry married Eleanor Jackson at Chelsea Old Church. Her mother was Sarah, a sister of the Revd J. R. Papillon, Rector of Chawton, so Henry would almost certainly have met her when he was curate there. Her father lived at 9 Sloane Terrace in the parish of Chelsea so there could have been encounters there too. It is possible that Jane had also met Eleanor's father while staying with Henry at Hans Place. She had certainly met a Mr Jackson there in 1815 and tells us, "Mr. Jackson is fond of eating and does not much like Mr. or Miss P." It sounds like a Chawton link and the reaction of a brother-in-law!

Two years earlier in 1813, Jane reveals that she had met, at least once, a niece of the Rector of Chawton, whose name was Eleanor. One wishes one could be sure that there was only one so named. Jane spent an evening at Chawton Rectory when this Eleanor was not present, but was gratefully remembered for having introduced the company to "Rejected Addresses". These were a series of Prologues supposed to have been submitted by

some contemporary poets in a competition for an Address for the re-opening of the Drury Lane Theatre in 1812. Actually, they were the work of James and Horatio Smith. These parodies, introduced by Eleanor, had much amused some of the company. Jane, enigmatically, wrote in a letter to Cassandra, "She looks like a Rejected Addresser." Does this comment mean that Eleanor had the dejected manner of one who had, so far, failed to find a husband, or that she had literary aspirations that had been unsuccessful?

The Eleanor Jackson that Henry married did achieve publication in 1831 during his time as Incumbent of Bentley, when she produced her "Epitome of the Old Testament." It was dedicated to the Bishop of Winchester and "written for the inhabitants of the parish." It proceeds by question and answer and occasionally sounds as if addressed rather to children, for example: "Q. 437. What are the names of the twelve minor Prophets, repeat them in the order in which they are placed in our Bible?"

The Epitome seems a competent piece of work, though to compress so much information into a small book of 135 pages must have been a formidable task and Eleanor was inevitably selective. Genesis and Exodus are dealt with in detail and occupy 57 pages; the Prophets are valued only for their foreshadowings of Christ; and the whole of the Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are disposed of in fewer than two pages. As one would expect at this period, she accepts all the biblical statements quite literally. A copy of this interesting booklet can be seen at Chawton Cottage.

Eleanor is a shadowy figure compared to Eliza but she seems to have had a happy disposition, prepared to make the best of restricted circumstances. Mrs Austen reports that Edward took Cassandra to Steventon to see "her new Sister who seems much pleased with her habitation and its environs." Cassandra's views on Eliza are not known but she wholeheartedly approved of Henry's second choice. Twice she refers in letters to Henry's "excellent wife" and deplores her poor health.

There is some evidence that during his incumbency at Bentley, Henry took his wife to France for a considerable period, presumably on medical advice. In 1836 they went to Bath and Henry wrote to Mr Thresher, his Churchwarden, from Duke Street, "Mrs. Austen continues to gain ground - she does not expect ever again to be a decided walker but she gets about the house comfortably and will probably be able to move from one floor to another." This suggests some disabling form of rheumatism but in spite of her poor health, Mrs Austen outlived her husband.

That Henry lived in genteel poverty for most of his clerical life comes out clearly in the family letters. Cassandra could write in 1833, "My brother Henry still continues to reside in his very

small benefice ... and is happy in an excellent wife and moderate wishes' but his letters to James's son tell a different story about his finances. James had written of the first Chawton curacy. "I **did** say and I **do** say that his salary is very low but it may lead to something better." This stipend was only £54.12.0d so that the additional Berlin Chaplaincy must have been very welcome. Steventon and the cures of Farnham and Bentley were improvements but when Henry resigned from Farnham and was dependent solely on Bentley, those years must have been a financial struggle.

Henry seems to have accepted that he would never rise further in the Church and it was to James's son, James Edward, that he turned for help. In 1832 he thanked his nephew for his promise "not to make any demands for the £400 which you have paid on my account ... so long as I myself or my wife Eleanor shall live". A little earlier, writing ruefully about payment of interest on another debt of £800, "though providence only can tell how much longer I shall have the means of doing it", he said he would repay the capital "should we become unexpectedly rich ... but my dreams of affluence, nay of competence, are closed."

In 1837 Mrs Leigh Perrot died and James Edward inherited a substantial part of her husband's capital in which she had held a life-interest. Henry would also have received the legacy of £1000 bequeathed to each of his nephews and nieces who should survive his widow. This bounty must have been very welcome and may have influenced his decision to retire at the age of sixty-eight from the Bentley cure.

The impression left by the scanty evidence is that Jane's "excruciating Henry" was a greatly sobered man in his latter years. There is no record of any Austen relative, other than James Edward, helping him. Although the bank failure was not his fault and he was not held to blame, several Austens had lost money by it. Had they, in the amiable but realistic Austen fashion, decided that he must now cope with his own difficulties? Eleanor does not appear to have had money of her own and her husband was much concerned about her future, should she outlive him. Fortunately, perhaps, there were no children by either marriage.

In such circumstances, the support of a devoted wife must have been a great solace. (One cannot imagine Eliza in this situation!) That Henry returned Eleanor's devotion is shown by his moving tribute to her in a letter to his nephew as "one dearer to me than life and for whose comfort I am solicitous beyond my own existence."

Winifred Midgley

Acknowledgments: to the Revd. W. Jarvis for much valuable material; to Miss Mary Eggar for information on Bentley; to the Farnham & District Museum Society for permission to reproduce part of my article on Henry Austen at Farnham, published in the Museum Newsletter.

The House in Castle Square

by Joan Grigsby

"My grandmother's house had a pleasant garden bounded on one side by the old city walls; the top of this wall was sufficiently wide to afford a pleasant walk with an extensive view easily accessible to ladies by steps."

This description of the house in Castle Square, Southampton, which Jane Austen shared with her mother, her sister Cassandra, her brother Frank and his wife and their friend Martha Lloyd, was written many years later by her nephew James Edward Austen Leigh in the Memoir of his aunt which, together with her own letters, must provide the starting point to everything that is written about the life of Jane Austen.

The water colour drawing by an unknown artist which is reproduced here was in an Exhibition at Bonfiglioni's Gallery in Oxford and is one of the few surviving records of this house in which the Austens lived from March 1807 to April 1809. That it was drawn prior to this date (about 1790) is obvious from the fact that the castle on the right is the old Henry VIII castle and not the Strawberry Hill gothic erection which was built by the Marquess of Lansdowne to replace it in 1804. This can be seen in the print of Southampton.

It was the Lansdowne castle which gave so much delight to the nine-year-old James Edward—son of Jane Austen's eldest brother, who succeeded his father as Rector of Steventon—when he visited his aunts and grandmother soon after their arrival in Castle Square. Many years later in his Memoir he wrote of it, and of the little phaeton driven by the Marchioness of Lansdowne. It was drawn by six or eight ponies of varying shades of colour :

"The two leading pairs were managed by boyish postillions and the two nearest to the carriage were driven in hand. It was delightful to me to look down from the window and see this fairy equipage put together; for the premises of this Castle were so contracted that the whole process went on in the little space that remained of the open square."

The first comments on the house itself come from a letter written by Jane to her sister Cassandra who, since she was visiting

their brother Edward in Kent at the time the move was made from the lodgings or furnished house which the Austens had occupied since the previous October, was not at hand to give her assistance. The letter is dated 8th February 1807.

"Frank and Mary," writes Jane, "cannot at all approve of your not being at home in time to help them in their finishing purchases and desire me to say that, if you are not they shall be as spiteful as possible, and chuse everything in the stile most likely to vex you, knives that will not cut, glasses that will not hold, a sofa without a seat, & a Bookcase without shelves. . . . Our Garden is being put in order by a Man who bears a remarkably good character, has a very fine complexion & asks something less than the first. The shrubs which border the gravel walk he says are only sweetbriar and roses and the latter of an indifferent sort.;—we mean to get a few of a better kind therefore & at my own particular desire he procures us some Syringas. I could not do without Syringa for the sake of Cowper's Line.—We talk also of a Laburnum—The Border under the Terrace Wall is clearing away to receive Currants and Gooseberry Bushes, & a spot is found very proper for raspberries."

Then she goes on to tell of the alterations which their brother, Captain Frank Austen R.N. (at that time on half pay) is making in the house. Frank, like Captain Harville in "Persuasion" was very handy about the house. A dressing table constructed out of a large kitchen table was one of his improvements, but before they can do this they have to get the permission of Mr Husket, Lord Lansdowne's Painter: "Domestic Painter I should call him for he lives in the Castle. Domestic Chaplains have given way to this more necessary office & I suppose whenever the walls want no touching up he is employed about my Lady's face."

During their stay in Southampton both Jane and her sister Cassandra visited their brother Edward at Godmersham in Kent. Cassandra was the more frequent visitor and there are fifteen letters written by Jane to her during the family's Southampton period. Twelve of these came from Castle Square; written between October 1808 and April 1809 and they provide us with a good deal of chat about the Austen's activities. They tell also of various events that occurred in the town, such as the fire in the High Street in October 1808; but this is overshadowed by the news received from Cassandra at Godmersham on 13th October, of the death of Elizabeth, the wife of Edward Austen and Jane hastens to send Cassandra her mourning clothes.

Edward's two eldest boys were at Winchester College and as Kent was too far for them to go to the funeral they went for a week to their Uncle James at Steventon and then to their Grandmother and Aunts in Castle Square.



Southampton (*Hampshire County Council*)

"Edward and George came to us soon after seven on Saturday, very well but very cold, having by choice travelled on the outside and with no great coat but what Mr. Wise the coachman, good naturedly spared them of his."

The days that followed were remembered for many years by the two boys who found in their Aunt Jane a stimulating and understanding companion and a source of comfort at a time when they so much needed it.

"We do not want amusement," wrote Aunt Jane, "biblocatch, at which George is indefatigable, spillikins, paper ships, riddles, and conundrums, and cards, with watching the flow and ebb of the river, and now and then a stroll out, keep us well employed."

There were visits to the quay and "a little water party" when they took a ferry boat with the idea of crossing to Woolston, but found themselves so delighted that they were rowed up the river with each of the boys taking an oar and were able to "look into the 74" in the shipbuilding yard at Northam. Whether a projected scheme for going to Netley ever matured we are not told, but that it was intended we know: "the tide," writes Jane, "is just right for our going immediately after noonshine (nuncheon?). but I am afraid there will be rain."

There was a visit to All Saints Church on the Sunday and finally the supplementing of the black mourning coats, provided by the somewhat parsimonious Uncle James, with the black pantaloons considered by the boys as essential.

"Of course," writes this understanding Aunt, "one would not

have them made uncomfortable by the want of what is usual on such occasions. . . . I do not believe Southampton is famous for tailoring, I hope it will prove itself better than Basingstoke."

The Austens' stay in Southampton was to end on a note of gaiety and one feels that had they stayed longer Jane might have become more attached to the town and its inhabitants.

"A large circle of acquaintance & an increase of amusement is quite in character with our approaching removal—Yes—I mean to go to as many Balls as possible that I may have a good bargain. Everybody is very much concerned with our going away & everybody is acquainted with Chawton & speaks of it as a very pretty village."

The description of the two balls which Jane wrote to Cassandra in Kent are reminiscent of similar scenes with which we have become so familiar in the novels.

"Our Ball was rather more amusing than I expected," she writes on December 9, 1808. "Martha liked it very much, & I did not gape til the last quarter of an hour. . . . The room was tolerably full, & there were perhaps thirty couple of Dancers;—the melancholy part was to see so many dozen young Women standing by without partners, & each of them with two ugly naked shoulders! . . . We paid an additional shilling for our Tea, which we took as we chose in an adjoining & very comfortable room.—There were only 4 dances & it went to my heart that the Miss Lances (one of them too named Emma!) should have partners for only two.—You will not expect to hear that I was asked to dance—but I was—by the Gentleman whom we met that Sunday with Capn D'Auvergne. We have always kept up a bowing acquaintance since, & being pleased with his black eyes, I spoke to him at the Ball, which brought on me this civility; but I do not know his name —& he seems so little at home in the English Language that I believe his black eyes may be the best of him."

Whether she danced or not we shall never know, but at 32 Jane Austen must have been an extremely elegant and attractive woman whose poise and maturity and a knowledge of his own language must have made her a target for any "dark eyed" Frenchman. It is possible that the young Miss Lances with their "ugly shoulders" would have stood little chance compared with her.

The second Ball, held like the first in the Long Room at the Dolphin, provides the material for almost the last letter written by Jane Austen from Castle Square. Once again it is to Cassandra at Godmersham and it is dated 24th January 1809:

"We were very well entertained and could have staid longer but for the arrival of my List shoes to convey me home, and I did



The House in Castle Square

not like to keep them waiting in the cold. The room was tolerably full and the Ball opened by Miss Glyn;—the Miss Lances had partners. . . . Everything went well you see, especially after we had tucked Mrs. Lance's neckhandkerf in behind and fastened it with a pin."

And so the days in Southampton ended on a happy note. In April the two sisters together with their mother and the ever faithful Martha Lloyd, left Castle Square. In July they took possession of their brother's cottage at Chawton. Edward had inherited both Chawton House and the Kentish Godmersham Park from his uncle Knight (whose name he took) and it was a choice between Chawton and a house near Canterbury; but the Austens had always considered themselves "Hampshire folk" and in Hampshire they chose to remain.

What is left to remind us of their stay in Southampton, of the fairycastle and the old house in the square? The house has gone, although part at least, of the wall that bounded its garden still remains. As for the castle, "it vanished" says the author of the Memoir "like the baseless fabric of a dream." The Marquis died in 1809 but his widow continued to occupy her castle until 1811. In 1816 the site was put up for sale and three years later the castle was demolished and the mound lowered. To-day a huge block of modern flats stands on the site and passers by may wonder why it is called Castle House.

The water colour drawing of the house in Castle Square is the property of the writer.

Notes on Auction Sales 1977-78

A. *Manuscripts.* Sotheby's sale of 12/13 December 1977 included seven lots of relevant manuscript material. Lot 265 was the manuscript of a dramatic adaptation of Samuel Richardson's novel *Sir Charles Grandison*. 53 pages, written out by Jane Austen and probably at least in part composed by her; this sold for £17,000. Lot 266 was the manuscript of a hitherto unknown continuation of *Sanditon* by Jane Austen's niece Anna Lefroy, 112 pages, £1,900. Lot 267 comprised two pages of notes by Anna Lefroy relating to *Sanditon*, sold for £200; Lot 268 was a transcript of a humorous letter by Jane Austen (see Constance Hill, *Jane Austen: her homes and her friends*, 1902, pp.195-196), sold for £55. Lot 269 consisted of 14 pages of notes by Anna Lefroy, being her recollections of her aunt, apparently written in connection with J. E. Austen-Leigh's 1870 *Memoir of Jane Austen*; these sold for £900. Lots 270 (a silhouette of Fanny Knight dated 1813) and 271 (an album of 'family poems' kept by Mary Leigh, wife of Rev. Thomas Leigh of Adlestrop) were unsold; Lot 271 was later

offered again as Lot 412 in Sotheby's sale of 6 June 1978, when it sold for £85.

The autograph manuscript of the greater part of *The Watsons* (all but the first six leaves, which are in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York), the last major manuscript to remain in private hands, was sold by Sotheby's on 25 July 1978, Lot 322, for £38,000. The same sale included an interesting group of five letters from Virginia Woolf to Dr. R. W. Chapman, of 1930, 1933 and 1936, all relating to Jane Austen, Lots 483-487; these sold for £370, £170, £350, £190 and £350 respectively.

B First editions. A copy of the first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811 in original paper boards was Lot 105 at Christie's, South Kensington, on 28 July 1978, the property of the Earl of Stair, and sold for the record price of £4,800.

A copy of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814 in a worn contemporary half calf binding, with no half-titles or advertisement leaf, was Lot 86 at Sotheby's on 19 December 1977 and sold for £220; another copy, again in contemporary half calf but with the half-titles, from the collection of Douglas C. Ewing, was Lot 37 at Christie's, New York on 7 April 1978 and sold for \$1900.

A first edition of *Emma* 1816 in original paper boards, from the collection of David Borowitz of Chicago, was Lot 5 at Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, on 15 November 1977 and sold for \$1600. The late Graham Pollard's copy of *Emma* in contemporary half calf with no half-titles was Lot 18 at Sotheby's on 3 July 1978, and sold for £280.

David Borowitz's copy of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818 in contemporary half calf with the half-titles was Lot 6 in his sale on 15 November 1977 and sold for \$375.

David Gilson

The Austens and Oxford - a correction

Rev. W. Jarvis has pointed out that Jane Austen's father was in fact ordained priest in 1755 (see Mr Jarvis' article 'Some information about Jane Austen's clerical connections' in the 1976 Report) and not in 1760 as I stated in last year's Report.

David Gilson

Brian Southam is preparing a second volume of the *Jane Austen : The Critical Heritage*, covering the years 1871-1939. If any members know of major reviews or essays in England and America which are not recorded in the bibliographies of Keynes and Chapman, he would welcome details to Orchard Lodge, Riverview Road, Pangbourne, Berks.

DISREGARDED DESIGNS:
JANE AUSTEN'S SENSE OF THE VOLUME

Address given by Dr Marilyn Butler
at the Annual General Meeting

Of all the elements in a work of art, the form, or central principle of design, seems at face value one of the simplest and most communicable. It is tempting to suppose that the sense of form is fairly constant: that, within the same culture at least, the artist and the onlooker, the writer and the reader, will tend to see the same figure in the carpet. Yet it is a matter of common experience that, often within a short number of years, the same object can come to look quite different, and literary designs become overlaid as readily as any. We can now see, because scholars have shown us, that long Elizabethan poems were constructed with elaborate, indeed mathematical, refinement. At a point about halfway between the Elizabethans and ourselves, in the eighteenth century, notions of form became radically severe, and decorative detail submitted to line. When in this period Thomas Warton helped to lead the revival of interest in the literary Elizabethans, he did not commend them for their intricacies—that would have been no commendation—but as primitives, who hardly aspired to design at all. As schoolboys, Coleridge and Lamb absorbed Warton's view, and Coleridge could therefore write of the "manly simplicity" of poets like Spenser and Donne.¹ In this context, his was surely an uneducated eye. A system forgotten looked to him like no system at all. Coleridge was arguably more completely mistaken on the subject of form than he could ever be on other large literary topics, such as character, or language.

Modern ideas of shape in the novel have been influenced by movements of taste one might label late Romanticism, especially by the aestheticism of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Henry James, both as a novelist and as a critic, has been a presiding genius over taste in design. His own novels and tales often appear to have been planned according to an external, almost neo-classical notion of symmetry, but formal patterns are certainly not what James likes to discuss when he writes of fiction. He is an organicist. He wants a novel to appear to grow spontaneously from a single idea—what he calls the *donnée*—and this at its most typical occurs in the novels as an acute moment of perception, a discovery, of tragic implication, within the consciousness of a single character. Other people, a story, shapes, symbols, symmetries, are present in his fiction, but all, he claims, as ways of making us feel his large emotional truth. James' novel-criticism is often an exercise in resisting other men's attempts to separate out his work into component parts. "The

story and the novel," he says, "the idea and the form, are the needle and the thread": distinct, certainly, but immobilised if taken apart. Analytical procedures remind him of the dissection of a living organism. 'The only classification of the novel that I can understand is into that which has life and that which has it not.'²

Jane Austen is perhaps the only novelist publishing before 1830 whose novels can be read as though Henry James had written them. A young girl is deciding whom to marry. There is our *donnée*, and nothing could seem more natural or more like ordinary life. And so Jane Austen's novels are artful in Henry James' sense, because they also appear artless, spontaneous and whole. While we are reading them this way, we are not likely to read them any other way. If it is hard to see an unfamiliar kind of pattern through an apparent jumble of detail, it is even harder to see it through a pattern that already appears distinct to us, and aesthetically satisfactory.

Nevertheless, it is a matter of record that Jane Austen, her immediate predecessors and her contemporaries, do not speak or write about organic form, the Jamesian notion of structure that becomes a seamless whole and is located, essentially, in the subjective experience of a central character. Naturalness and verisimilitude, qualities which relate the world of the novel to the actual world, are critical terms to conjure with before 1830; unity, which takes the novel to be self-sufficient, is not. About 1830, Jane Austen's contemporary, Maria Edgeworth, set out to write the last of her novels, *Helen*. She was out of practice: she had not published a novel since 1817, the year of Jane Austen's death. In the interval, new literary ideas had become current, the principles that novels should be built around characters rather than around didactic themes, and that they should have a strong unifying action. Maria Edgeworth's young stepsisters tactfully urged these fashions of the rising generation upon the novelist—who, having rather lost her nerve, was eager to listen to their advice. "I quite feel all you say about the advantage of putting characters in action."³ But it was easier said than done, for a writer who by now had other notions in her bones. One senses, reading *Helen*, a new departure, not quite mastered, into a more sustained, continuous pattern of narrative.

What Maria Edgeworth's generation, and Jane Austen's, had been brought up to include something quite prosy and literal: the solid physical presence of two books, or three, that weighed somewhat against the metaphysical notion of one novel. By the late 1820s, publishers began to aim at a mass market by producing books much more cheaply in a single volume. From the 1830s came the practice of serialisation in parts. It is clear that issuing a book in parts has a large influence upon its general design, and

upon the way the story is told. When every episode has to be intrinsically interesting, but also to leave the reader wondering what happens next, a premium is put on eventfulness. Jane Austen would not have written as she did for publication that way. But she wrote as she did for publication in volumes. Isn't it reasonable to suppose that this affects the way she arranges her material, and, deeper, the very sense that she has of her own design?

It would be a matter for a different kind of investigation, why novels of Jane Austen's day came out in such a variety of forms, from Peacock's *Headlong Hall* in one volume to Fanny Burney's *Camilla* in five. This was a decision for the publisher, a commercial calculation. Prices of books were going up in the late eighteenth century, and after the nineties, in wartime, they went up again. In fact, in Jane Austen's day novels were relatively dearer than ever before or since. Purchasers had to pay five shillings a volume for *Sense and Sensibility*, and six shillings a volume for all the others, except *Emma*, which cost seven. How much to charge per volume, and how many volumes to issue a novel in, were professional questions, decided by the length of the text, and by the publisher's estimate of how much the public would wear. The more volumes, the greater the profit, if the novel sold. But if it did not sell, the publisher's costs, for labour and for paper, were likely to be high.

It is one matter, how the publisher calculated; another, what supposition was in the author's mind when he or she wrote. It is my impression that the genteel author liked to be seen aiming at the shorter length, which looked less like profiteering. Perhaps this was less so in 1797, when the Rev. George Austen offered *First Impressions*, the future *Pride and Prejudice*, to Cadell as a novel in three volumes. But the price had gone up by 1811, when Jane Austen wrote *Sense and Sensibility*—and this looks uncommonly like a novel designed in two volumes, even though Thomas Egerton, the publisher, chose to bring it out in three. The same is also surely true of the revised *Pride and Prejudice*. Indeed, Jane Austen boasted in January 1813, "I have lop't and crop't so successfully, . . . that I imagine it must be rather shorter than S. & S. altogether."⁴ Her father estimated in 1797 that *First Impressions* was about the length of *Evelina*, which means, if correct, that the new version is only three-quarters of the length of the old. But the cutting did not induce Egerton to bring out *Pride and Prejudice* in two volumes. Once again, he preferred three.

A possible insight into the author's thinking is provided by another gentlewoman who disliked being thought of as a professional writer. Maria Edgeworth had to handle her own business decisions for the troublesome last novel, *Helen*. At the

time of writing, she might have been glad of money to help her financially embarrassed family, but she was also bent on cutting her manuscript down to make a two-volume novel, and felt awkward when her publisher offered her an extra £200 to publish it in three:

"You find that I did not swear or kick but behaved like a reasonable woman & a lady moreover & pockets my £200 with a very good grace. . . . I know that far from having stretched a single page or a single sentence to *make out* a third volume—I have cut away as much as ever I could—cut it to the quick—and now it matters not whether it be printed in 2 or 3 volumes." ⁵

It mattered somewhat to her, however: a lady did not like to feel greedy. She liked the smaller scale, not only for aesthetic reasons—the two inches of ivory—but also the modest, reasonable call upon the public purse. For Jane Austen, who published anonymously, and pushed the sheets under the blotter when visitors called, to plan for two volumes came as naturally as it did for Maria Edgeworth. At any rate, the internal evidence suggests to me that, with one significant exception, she generally did so.

If Jane Austen went on thinking, despite her publisher, that she was a two-volume novelist, Scott knew that he would come out in three. When he turned to the novel in 1814, he was already a phenomenally successful poet. *Waverley* might be anonymous; but Scott himself had all the self-confidence, the professionalism, the open concern for financial success, that Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth shrank from. Scott thought in large subjects, what he called the big bow-wow strain, and he also thought in three or four volumes, for which the public was charged from the first a steep price—seven shillings a volume for *Waverley*, going up to ten for *Ivanhoe* and ten and six for *Kenilworth*. Scott worked closely with his publishers, often delivering the text to them volume by volume. In other words, he conceived his novels in the actual volume-format in which they appeared, rather than having the pattern imposed by his publisher. I don't think anyone has followed up the implication of this for Scott's novels. The volumes are designed, often quite elaborately designed, as volumes: his novels are three books in one. Later readers, finding them rearranged into two volumes apiece in a Collected Edition, or crammed into one volume in abominable print, have tended to conclude that Scott's volumes are badly designed or perhaps not designed at all. On the contrary, he has, I think, a sophisticated sense of structure, of a kind new in the novel. Even Fielding, a meticulous planner, has nothing quite resembling Scott's imaginative, often near-symbolic, use of design motif. In *Old Mortality*, each volume is planned around a battle or skirmish. In *The Antiquary*, three gentlemen, Jonathan Oldbuck, Sir Arthur Wardour, the Earl of Glenallan, are seen against the

settings of their ancestral homes, in which they all take great pride. But largely by means of the beggar, Edie Ochiltree, who moves on foot between the houses, the reader comes to visit homes which are the focus of very different ways of life and livelihood: the fisherman's hovel at the foot of the cliff, the Fairport post office. He is also taken, with sardonic effect, to the ruined abbey of St. Mary's, where deception is practised on Sir Arthur, and to the mound which Oldbuck mistakes for a Roman fort. Within each volume, the "houses" are arranged in a pattern like counterpoint. By parallel and contrast, Scott means to undercut the pride of house. This kind of elaborateness was possible only when the author felt confident of his control over the publication process, as few but Scott did.

The lack of co-operation between most authors and their publishers strikes one in retrospect as a curious business. The better novelists write with consistent awareness of division into volumes. Their work breaks into blocks of approximately suitable length. Often there is a change of scene, or the passage of time, at a point where a new volume would probably be required. And the new volume does not follow on from the old in a simple linear development, but to some extent runs parallel with it, repeating, or challenging, its ideas. Yet, as often as not, authors who have written their books this way find them bound up differently. With all their forethought they did not, apparently, use the covering letter—or, if they did, scant notice was taken at the printing-house.

To take two examples from the 1790s, Jane Austen's formative years as a novelist. Elizabeth Inchbald published her *Simple Story* in four volumes in 1791. This was in a sense two simple stories. The first half, written many years earlier as a complete short novel, is the story of a spoilt heiress, Miss Milner, who falls in love with her guardian, Dorriforth, a Catholic priest. Halfway through Miss Milner's story, Mrs Inchbald, an experienced dramatist, has worked a climax. Miss Milner's friend, knowing of her passion for Dorriforth, threatens to tell him unless Miss Milner voluntarily leaves his house. At this point, with the distressed heroine's journey to Bath, the second volume correctly begins. The start of the third volume is right again: it begins what is in effect a new plot, the story in the next generation of Matilda, the daughter of Miss Milner's ill-starred marriage to Dorriforth. But the printer has spoilt the break at the end of the third volume. Mrs Inchbald had contrived another climax there, meant to echo the end of Volume 1. Matilda has been living in the same house as her father, but he refuses to see her. After they have met accidentally, he sends her away. The third volume was obviously meant to end poignantly, with Matilda's carriage rolling away from Dorriforth's house, just as her mother's did a generation earlier. Mrs Inchbald's nicely contrived curtain is

lost, by a printer who begins the last volume at an insignificant point, one chapter too soon.

Mrs Radcliffe is even worse served in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. She has designed a novel of four volumes, the first and last to be set in Languedoc, the middle two in Italy. The printer ends the first volume correctly, with Emily's farewells to the hero, Valancourt; the next volume has her setting out to cross the Alps. But Mrs Radcliffe clearly meant that this volume, which describes the heroine's imprisonment in the castle of Udolpho, should end with a brief interpolated chapter telling of Valancourt's dissipation at the French court. This digression would have had the effect of intensifying Emily's plight, making the reader fully aware that she is not only imprisoned by Montoni but, for the time being, abandoned by her lover. Unfortunately the printer chooses to squeeze a further four chapters into the second volume, and he does the same at the end of the third, so that one of Mrs Radcliffe's real skills as a novelist, her architectural sense of structure, is obscured.

Authors who clung to their amateur status were at a disadvantage when dealing with those avowed professionals, the publishers. This was probably true for gentlemen authors; certainly Thomas Love Peacock would seem not to have had his way with *Melincourt*, 1817, a work which is planned with careful symmetry for three volumes - and issued in three, divided up with the usual indifference to authorial logic.⁶ But the problem was surely exacerbated for gentlewomen, who were doubly obliged, by notions both of sex and of caste, not to be seen to take their writing too seriously. Female authors emerged from a narrower band at the upper end of the social scale than their male counterparts, since other women (with scarce exceptions, like Ann Yearsley, the Bristol Milkwoman) were unlikely to have the requisite education. Very probably the upper-class women drawn to writing were more inclined than many male litterateurs to work at their craft; to polish and burnish, as the Edgeworths put it; and thus to see the design possibilities of the volume. At the same time, their lines of communication to their publishers were liable to be vulnerably long. Often, where anything is known of this crucial relationship—certainly in the cases of Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth, though not in Charlotte Smith's—a male relative acted as intermediary. One hopes that even ladies were capable of feeling a certain ire at the indifference to their own wishes that this situation encouraged.

R. W. Chapman seems to have assumed that the volume-divisions in Jane Austen's first editions do match the author's intentions, but it is not clear why he thinks so.⁷ It is true that Jane Austen does not try to round off her volumes with the same drama and point as Mrs Inchbald, or the same grave formality

as Mrs Radcliffe. Quite often the Austen chapters just seem to stop, and this can be true even when one guesses that she has mentally reached the end of an entire volume. At first sight this will appear paradoxical. Her mode of thought seems profoundly influenced by her notion of volume. In her three shorter novels—*Northanger Abbey*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Persuasion*—she uses one of the most emphatic methods of distinguishing between her two parts, a complete change of location. But she seems to have little faith that the printer will hit a particular spot, and with reason. Though her novels came out as sixteen volumes, there is only one instance—in *Persuasion*—where the division looks as though it was selected with an eye to literary effect, rather than convenience—or accident.

A design which Jane Austen herself did not round off as formally as the other writers I have mentioned rounded theirs, and which the printer consistently ignored, sounds as though it might not be of much lasting interest. I want to imagine what it would be like if we could hold the novels in our hands as volumes—not, that is, the sixteen volumes which emerged from the printing house, but the units which appear to have taken shape in the author's own mind. If these volumes were allowed a certain integrity, an expressive power of their own, would reading Jane Austen be an altered experience?

Northanger Abbey was the first of the novels to be sent to a publisher, as *Susan*, in 1803. In the end it was among the last to be published, coming out in 1818 as half of a four-volume set with *Persuasion*. It's worth beginning with, because from the point of view of volume-arrangement it is the most naive of the novels: a typical two-volume story, set out with a kind of blunt symmetry. Volume 1, chapter 1, which has Catherine at home with her parents, is roughly balanced by her return to them three chapters from the end. Otherwise the plan is of course to show Catherine's adventures in the world, at Bath in the first volume and at Northanger Abbey in the second.

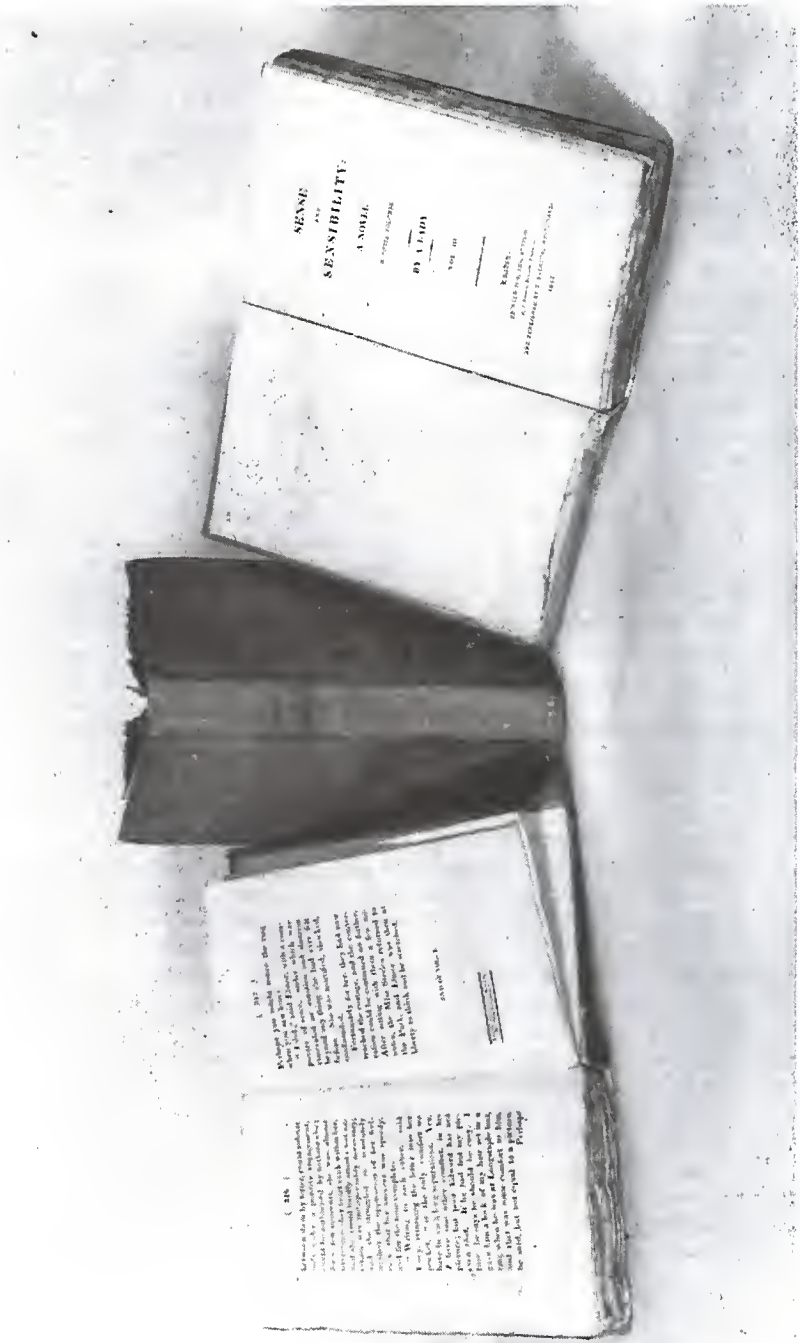
What is the significance of this? Two volumes, one weighed in either hand, make, notionally, two parallel stories. But usually we do our best to read *Northanger Abbey* as a single, unitary action. Catherine is deceived—this, we are told, is where the interest lies—first by sentimental fiction, and then by Gothic fiction. The book, in true Jamesian style, is about her seeing through both deceptions, and growing up. But *is* she deceived by sentimental fiction while she is at Bath? She is taken in by the Thorpes, which is not the same thing. The Bath section of the novel reads—if read without preconceptions—more like an imitation of the Burney type of novel, in which the heroine encounters a series of embarrassments, than like any sort of literary burlesque. Because Catherine makes her celebrated

mistake at *Northanger*, a too literal application of Mrs Radcliffe to real life, the modern reader feels tempted to bring the first half of the book into line, and above all to see it consistently, even rather grandly, in terms of the heroine's progress towards maturity.

The successive titles are no help. In 1803, the novel was to have been called *Susan*; by 1817, it had become *Catherine*; both titles, Jane Austen's presumably, do certainly imply a story about a heroine's progress. The posthumous title *Northanger Abbey* quite visibly throws the book off balance by focussing attention on the allusions to the Gothic—which leads us back, in turn, to the heroine's folly. But what if some kind of Trades Descriptions Act had been in force, whereby a book's title had to reflect its contents? What if, unimaginably, it had come out into the world as *Bath and Northanger Abbey*?

The design after all seems to give a rough notional equality to the two locations—even if Bath gets nearly twice the number of pages. Once the reader perceives this, he may also find significance in the way the two actions are matched. The Thorpes and the General are very modern people, modern in being mercenary. They are peculiarly acquisitive about possessions, especially the flashy kind that impress other people: Isabella acquires clothes, John horses, the General a house and garden full of the latest consumer goods. Because of this common taste, they become linked in the plot, to a degree which in real life would not be entirely probable for people of such different social status. Isabella pursues Frederick Tilney, while John misinforms the General about Catherine—who, as a supposed heiress, becomes their common quarry.

The effect of seeing the two-volume design as important to Jane Austen is to turn the emphasis around. When Catherine comes out into the world, at Bath and at Northanger, the Thorpes and the General are in effect the world that she meets. They are the novel's most active characters, its schemers. Catherine's conversations with Henry and Eleanor Tilney, which the romantic approach takes to be central, could alternatively be seen as reflective interludes, throwing light upon the satirical sketch of the world. From this point of view, the novel does not need its Gothic burlesque, which is indeed a distraction. Giving too much weight to the Gothic idea, in its few chapters at Northanger, means interpreting the entire action as Catherine's awakening from a world of illusion to something better, the world of reality. One objection to this is that the text of the novel does not often concern itself with Catherine's fantasy life. Another is that though Jane Austen does seem interested in portraying reality, she does not present it as desirable, or capable of contributing positively to Catherine's moral education. If the Thorpes and General Tilney represent the real world—and the novel's symmetrical



The First Edition of *Sense and Sensibility*, in three volumes (Jane Austen Memorial Trust)

arrangement suggests that they do, that there are many more like them—then the world is an unpleasant place, vain, cold and greedy. An endearing goose of a heroine is there as a contrast, and a consolation, for a sharp little vignette about society. *Susan*, or *Northanger Abbey*, might strike us as the comic romance of such a heroine. *Bath and Northanger Abbey* is a satirical novel which reflects on Southern England rather than on the pretend-Pyrenees.

A novel in two balancing parts need not necessarily be a novel primarily directed at describing the outer world, but its patterns of symmetry and recurrence do give special opportunities to the social novelist. With *Sense and Sensibility* Jane Austen seems fully aware of this. The first chapter, with its memorable vignette of the financial arrangements of Mr and Mrs John Dashwood, is conscientiously matched by a last chapter which deals with the policy of John, Fanny and Mrs Ferrars towards the various marriages. In the first volume, Elinor and Marianne are at Barton Cottage, the country; in the second they are in London, the town. Events in each repeat themselves with an elaborate symmetry not attempted in *Northanger Abbey*. The two sisters have each to decide whether their lovers love them; when they conclude that they don't, they have to bear up under the strain in order not to upset everyone else. In the country, light is thrown on the state of each young man's heart by his attitude to staying at Barton Cottage; in the town, each appears to settle the matter by becoming engaged to someone else. The knife is turned in Elinor's heart in each volume by the malicious triumphing of Lucy Steele: Colonel Brandon comes in on cue to hold out the hope of future comfort to Marianne. Such a catalogue makes the book sound excessively schematic; it is, though not nearly as bad to read as uncovering the skeleton of the plot makes it sound. Considering that the book is planned to make the same things happen to two girls in each of two volumes—which means that every significant point is made four times—*Sense and Sensibility* is surprisingly natural. The scheme is always in practice being quietly softened, even in the too summary and didactic last chapter. Bringing back Mr and Mrs John Dashwood throws the reader's mind back to Norland Park, where the girls lost their childhood home. It is a reminder of the transition from girlhood to maturity, a hint of the emotional cost by which maturing is achieved, even though the surface of the writing deals with none of these things.

And yet, the symmetries are there, and presumably for a purpose. It's a striking feature of the way in which the two complementary volumes are conceived that the two societies, country and town, seem representative. The scale is panoramic, where in *Northanger Abbey* it was more intimate and domestic. Though Catherine Morland goes to the well-known public rooms at Bath, and walks and rides down real, named streets, Jane

Austen does not attempt a sketch of Bath society. The great fictional representations of Bath are Smollett's in *Humphry Clinker* or Fanny Burney's in *Evelina*, but even *Persuasion* gives a much clearer sense of an observed real world, with its different degrees of fashion—the exclusiveness of Camden place, where Sir Walter has taken the best house, the heterogeneity of the public rooms, where Sir Walter keeps snobbishly to his own circle. There are no such social gradations in the Bath of *Northanger Abbey*, nor the same sense that, when Catherine leaves it, she leaves Town for Country.

But *Sense and Sensibility* deals in just these generalities. The Middletons, who rule social life at Barton, are typical country gentry, with the appropriate vices and virtues. Sir John has an old-fashioned sense of hospitality, and a genial passion for field-sports, but the tone of his family circle is dull and uncultivated. His kindness mitigates his wife's insipid formality, just as Mrs. Jennings' vulgar warmth offsets the hard rapacity of Mrs. Ferrars' ambience. The nouveau riche London world in *Sense and Sensibility* is Jane Austen's most sustained general social satire, and it is unrelieved by any quiddity in the individual lesser characters, or humour in their dialogue. Perhaps Jane Austen drew her City circle so black because she had little experience of anything like it, outside the pages of a Burney novel. The impression of a universal nastiness, east of Hounslow Heath, becomes all the more emphatic.

There cannot be any one way to read a novel by a great writer. But we hear so much about the two heroines of *Sense and Sensibility*, especially Marianne, that we are in danger of thinking it has to be read as a story about two sisters, when it is palpably designed at the same time as a story about England. Elinor, with her more sophisticated intellectuality, understands more about the outer world than Marianne does, and what happens to her has a more continuous social point. It is Elinor who is placed in direct competition with the anti-heroine, Lucy Steele, for the same man, Edward Ferrars. Elinor's ideal of civility is more poignantly challenged than is Marianne's unsociability by Lucy's parody of civility, her obsequious currying of favour. The outcome in this competition is pointed, even a little bitter: the immaculately behaved Elinor gets Edward, but Lucy the status, the income, the family approval. Elinor's choice is in the author's eyes the better part—a modest competence and independence in a country vicarage—but Lucy's success in achieving *her* aims is meanwhile a decided comment on the state of the rest of the nation.

Pride and Prejudice, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* are the great central sequence of Jane Austen's career, written when she was already a published author, and before the shadow of her final illness. The design of them reflects her growing confidence in her

own powers, although only *Emma*, the last of three, looks like a bold plan for three volumes rather than for two. At some stage, *Pride and Prejudice* has certainly been conceived as a novel in two parts: a volume of Elizabeth hating Mr Darcy, and ending by refusing him, has been balanced by Elizabeth falling in love with Mr Darcy, and ending by accepting him. Conceptually *Mansfield Park* also falls into two, as plainly as any of the novels. Part 1 deals with the Bertram sisters' entry into the world, and the bad job they make of it: their defective education, their ambition to marry money, their readiness at the same time to be tempted by Henry Crawford. Then Fanny tries, for all the world like the youngest child in the fairy tale; and of course like so many boys called Jack, or girls like Cinderella, she meets the same adventures as her unsuccessful seniors. But Fanny copes with ballrooms the better for still clinging to the schoolroom, and her youngest-child's caution and shrewdness and inner resource make her healthily suspicious of those bad fairies, the Crawfords.

It has been a pity, for Fanny's credit with many readers, that her heroine-ly qualities have been obscured by the publisher's rearrangement. If the first volume had ended with Maria's marriage to Mr Rushworth, we should have been prompted to see Maria as the protagonist, or anti-heroine, of volume one, and Fanny as the true heroine of volume two. As it is, volume one ends *in medias res*, with Sir Thomas' return from Antigua: the reader is free to compare Fanny not with Maria but with Mary, which is not nearly so much to her advantage. But how much it says about Jane Austen's growing subtlety that, though she did evidently have a use for a symmetrical structure in *Mansfield Park*, it scarcely resembles the way she used the device in *Sense and Sensibility*. *Mansfield Park* is a reflective novel, which works through the experience of its characters. The portrayal of the Bertram family incidentally tells us a great deal about the English gentry in 1814—more indeed than the Middletons and Ferrars put together—but it does so in a personal way. There is neither an attempt at a panorama, nor a claim to representativeness. When the scene moves to Portsmouth, it does so in order to complicate Fanny's predicament, especially the pressure on her to marry Henry. It would be perverse to read this sequence as an excursion to see how the other half lives. For *Mansfield Park* nowhere deploys the technique to which the two-volume format perhaps more obviously lends itself, the direct, objective comparison of contrasting social worlds. It is a novel of interiors, about families and their houses. Sotherton, gutted since its chapel ceased to be a chapel. Mansfield Park, where the sons and daughters of the family, aided by aunt Norris, turn their father's study into a theatre. The Parsonage, whose occupants seem to have been preoccupied, in their very different styles, with housekeeping. Portsmouth, nominally Fanny's home, but proving

no home to her in practice. A motif of hollowness repeats itself: houses put to frivolous or materialistic use, families without family-feeling, professionals without vocation. This is a much more complex way of novel-building, localised, suggestive, innovatory. It has a great deal to do ultimately with Jane Austen's perception of the state of the gentry in her day, but the means are indirect—as they will be with *Emma*—more truly than elsewhere the two or three families in a village.

To say that with *Persuasion* we return to externality may seem on the face of it perverse. Anne Elliot is the most feeling and introspective of the heroines, and her consciousness is the medium through which the story is told. Hers is the most moving of Jane Austen's narratives. And yet, *Persuasion* has also been planned as a two-volume novel, with all the old clear-cut symmetries of Jane Austen's relatively novice performances.

Each volume is more rounded and complete than ever before. *Persuasion* is built upon two distinct "stories": in volume 1 Wentworth appears to fall in love with Louisa, while Anne looks on; in volume 2, she is courted by Mr Elliot, while Wentworth looks on. But Jane Austen was by now an experienced author, who knew all too well that no plan, however clear-cut, would necessarily be carried out. With *Sense and Sensibility* she designed a novel in two locations, but her publisher had Elinor and Marianne set off for London at Vol. 2, ch. iv. (He was similarly to delay Catherine's departure for Northanger Abbey until ch. v of the second volume.) It may be a sign of Jane Austen's growing familiarity with the ways of publishers that she creates a buffer zone of two chapters between her two main locations. After her visit to Uppercross, before her departure for Bath, Anne goes to stay with Lady Russell at Kellynch Lodge. The publisher begins Volume 2 immediately before this sequence, just after the day at Lyme; but it would clearly have suited the author's scheme equally well, or disarranged it as little, if he had delayed for two chapters. Apart from this instance of prudent flexibility, the novel is formally planned. As in *Sense and Sensibility*, Volume 1 is set in the country (among the Musgroves at Uppercross); Volume 2 in the town (among the Elliots at Bath)—with the additional refinement, that the first volume is prefaced by five chapters with Sir Walter Elliot at Kellynch, and the second concluded by three chapters with the Musgroves at Bath. When, in his book on *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts*, Mr Brian Southam discussed her changes to these last chapters of *Persuasion*, he showed how the new version is much more introspective than the first one. This is indeed true; but the revised ending is also more formal and symmetrical, in terms of the two-volume scheme—and I wonder whether this is not equally likely to have been Jane Austen's motive for making the change.⁸

For here in *Persuasion*, even more than in *Sense and Sensibility*, is a most careful design, surely intended to be noticed, and itself expressive of a significant part of Jane Austen's meaning. Like the Middletons, the Musgroves are typical country people. They are more precisely specified than the Middletons, because Jane Austen observes that at the end of the Napoleonic Wars the manners of the gentry are in a state of transition, between old ways and new:

"To the Great House accordingly they went, to sit the full half hour in the old-fashioned square parlour, with a small carpet and shining floor, to which the present daughters of the house were gradually giving the proper air of confusion by a grand piano forte and a harp, flower-stands and little tables placed in every direction. Oh! could the originals of the portraits against the wainscot, could the gentlemen in brown velvet and the ladies in blue satin have seen what was going on, have been conscious of such an overthrow of all order and neatness! The portraits themselves seemed to be staring in astonishment.

The Musgroves, like their houses, were in a state of alteration, perhaps of improvement. The father and mother were in the old English style, and the young people in the new. Mr and Mrs Musgrove were a very good sort of people; friendly and hospitable, not much educated, and not at all elegant. Their children had more modern minds and manners. . . . Henrietta and Louisa, young ladies of nineteen and twenty, . . . had brought from a school at Exeter all the usual stock of accomplishments, and were now, like thousands of other young ladies, living to be fashionable, happy, and merry." 9

At Bath, just as the fashionable world is analysed in its gradations, so too its seedy underside is allowed to appear. Parvenus and adventurers like Mrs Clay and William Walter Elliot are parasites upon the aristocracy. It is a town world which rivals in its distastefulness the London of *Sense and Sensibility*, while seeming much more closely observed. The general nastiness is clearly intended. There is a social dimension in the unpleasant behaviour of Sir Walter Elliot; Sir Thomas Bertram and Mr Bennet matter almost wholly in the domestic sphere, as heads of their respective families. Sir Walter's abandonment of Kellynch for self-indulgence at Bath is not seen primarily in terms of its effect on Anne, but as a point of general principle. Anne is not so much his victim, as the dispassionate observer who notices that Admiral Croft is a more manly and practical occupant of Kellynch than her father had been. Equally, Captain Wentworth was a more effective guardian to poor Dick Musgrove than were Dick's kind but muddle-headed parents.

There is nothing in the least revolutionary about this critique of the existing gentry. Jane Austen is arguing that the true gentleman is a paternalist, and that is no levelling doctrine. She

of course also shows that he is properly the head of a loving family, for the family is the microcosm of the landed estate, the village community, the nation at large. It is not radical, but it is social, and critical. However poignant the love-story, and sweetly disordered Anne's consciousness, the issues conveyed to us through her awareness of them have not to do with her love story only.

Yet if this is true, *Persuasion* remains the most puzzling of the novels. Jane Austen had become immensely subtle in her ways of representing the inner life; in her last three novels, her art had become increasingly introspective and complex in the way it was organised. Why should she then seem to fall back upon a structure which, however useful and effective, is also blunt—and indeed induces her to create lesser characters, and dialogue, as simplified and bitterly unfunny as any outside *Sense and Sensibility*? One can only speculate. Jane Austen's health is a possible factor. But it is also surely significant that while she was writing *Persuasion* in 1816, the condition of England was widely felt to be giving cause for alarm. Jane Austen's last novel, *Sanditon*, begun in January 1817, promises to be the most thorough-going social satire yet, a story about more gentry who have abandoned their homes and estates for fashion or speculation or a feverish search for novelty. It is hard to pass a critical judgment on *Sanditon*, which is so incomplete, but it looks as though imaginative visual effects were to have been grafted on the relatively crude techniques of eighteenth century satire. The desire to comment on modern life was taking Jane Austen back to certain simple, expressive devices—typed characters, identifiable by exaggerated peculiarities of speech, together approximating to an impression of a whole community. Where all these are appropriate, so too are the contrasting volumes, together representing a social panorama.

Jane Austen sent Maria Edgeworth, whom she admired, a complimentary copy of *Emma*. As would often happen in the early nineteenth century, it was read aloud to the family circle, and at the end of the first volume came the time for taking stock. The Edgeworths decided to pass it on to friends, the last two volumes unread, since, as Maria Edgeworth said,

"... there was no story in it, except that Miss Emma found that the man whom she designed for Harriet's lover was an admirer of her own ... and smooth, thin water-gruel is according to Emma's father's opinion a very good thing & it is very difficult to make a cook understand what you mean by smooth thin water gruel!"¹⁰

That first volume ends slightly awkwardly, after a chapter in which Frank Churchill's coming visit is discussed. Would the Edgeworths have reacted so unfavourably if what they had just

read ended well, almost immediately after the scene in the carriage in which Mr Elton proposes? Perhaps not. Not even *Emma* merely aims to imitate by its easy flow the naturalistic life of a village, though Victorians like Mrs Gaskell were soon writing this kind of episodic, desultory novel, and assuming that their predecessors wrote them too. In the case of *Emma*, Jane Austen had surely designed a plan to point up her heroine's tendency to make mistakes. The first two volumes should each end with a proposal from the wrong suitor, comically compared: Mr Elton, really proposing to Emma, though she expects him to speak of Harriet; Frank Churchill, actually revealing his love for Jane, though Emma takes him to be making love to her. Both these lesser climaxes anticipate the grand one, when Emma longs for Mr Knightley to propose, and thinks he will not because he is in love with Harriet.

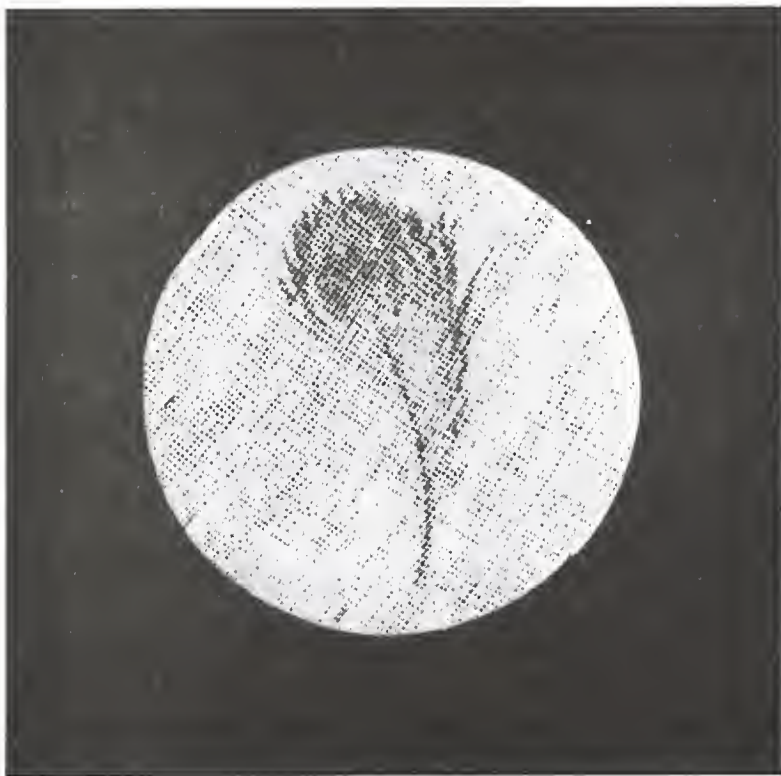
With the shorter novels, Elinor, Anne and even Catherine Morland are observers, gazing at a representation of the wider world which symmetry in arrangement helps to order for us. The obscured designs might well have suggested concerns that were not merely personal, or parochial; just as a more faithful first section of *Emma* would have drawn attention to something other than the recipe for water-gruel. A complete novel will always be more than the sum of its parts. But, when the parts are volumes, it may be that as well.

NOTES

- 1 *Biographia Literaria*, 1817, ch. 1.
- 2 *The Art of Fiction*, 1884.
- 3 Maria Edgeworth to Fanny Wilson, 1 November 1831.
- 4 Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen, 29 January 1813: *Letters*, ed. R. W. Chapman, 1959, p. 298. The same letter alludes to the appearance of *Pride and Prejudice* in terms which seem to hint at the mild embarrassment felt by both sisters at the business side of publication: "... it might be unpleasant to you to be in the neighbourhood at the first burst of the business. The Advertisement is in our paper to-day for the first time 18s. He shall ask £1.1 for my two next and £1.8 for my stupidest of all." (p. 297)
- 5 Maria Edgeworth to Honora Edgeworth, 2 November 1833 (quoted in full M. Butler, *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography*, Oxford, 1972, p. 465).
- 6 See my *Peacock Displayed* (forthcoming), London, 1979.
- 7 'Introductory Note' to his edition of *Pride and Prejudice*, 3rd ed., 1932, p.xii.
- 8 For a fuller analysis of the design see G. J. F. Kilroy, "Ironic Balance in *Persuasion*," *Downside Review*, xcvi (October 1978) 305—313. An early view . . .
- 9 *Persuasion*, ed. R. W. Chapman, 3rd ed., 1933, p.40.
- 10 Maria Edgeworth to Sneyd and Harriet Edgeworth, n.d. [1816]: Butler, *Maria Edgeworth*, p. 445.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1979



Feather motif on a piece of muslin, left to the Society by
Dr R. W. Chapman

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £1,
and a single payment of £15 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

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THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1979

Membership

There were 107 new members during the year, of whom 24 became Life Members, as did 17 old members. There are now 1,700 individual members, as well as 43 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £1 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday, 21st July, when over 600 members and their friends were present. Lord David Cecil presided and asked that the Minutes of the last Annual Meeting be taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Report for 1978, and, in the absence through illness of the Hon. Treasurer, the accounts. These were seconded by Dr J. W. Maycock and carried.

Mr Brian Southam proposed that Lord David Cecil be re-elected President, Mr John Gore Vice-President and Sir Hugh Smiley Chairman of the Society. This was seconded by Colonel Miles Reid and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The address was given by Lord David Cecil on "Jane Austen, a Summing Up". A vote of thanks was proposed by Miss Margaret Lane (Countess of Huntingdon), seconded by the Countess of Selborne and carried.

The meeting closed by the President thanking Major and Mrs Edward Knight for lending Chawton House once again for the meeting.

Annual General Meeting 1980

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday, 20th July, when Miss Elizabeth Jenkins will give the address.

Jane Austen's Letters

The Oxford University Press have reprinted Dr R. W. Chapman's edition of *Jane Austen's Letters*. The price is £15.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, Orchard Lodge, Riverview Road, Pangbourne, Berks.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of *Jane Austen in Bath*, by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Selborne Bookshop, Alton, Hampshire.

Price: 40p (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-75

The second volume of *Collected Reports* is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £7.50, post free.

Woodhouse of Hartfield

by Dr R. W. Chapman

Social discrimination was a not unimportant element in the lives of Jane Austen and her contemporaries real or fictitious. Emma Woodhouse thought that indifference to social stratification argued a lack of elegance and Dr Johnson would have agreed with her. It is thus not irrelevant to consider the social status of Mr Woodhouse of Hartfield. The name Woodhouse is less obviously distinguished than Darcy or Tilney or Bertram or Dashwood or Churchill; it is perhaps as non-committal as Bennet. The Wodehouses of Kimberley go back to the fourteenth century and in Jane Austen's time their ancient baronetcy had been merged in a barony. At the other extreme was Woodhouse the cobbler poet. We are on surer ground with Hartfield, which is described as a house rather than a 'seat'. It 'did really belong' to Highbury, from which it was distinguished, socially as topographically, only by its 'separate lawn and shrubberies and name'. Hartfield, then, though it had its garden and its pigsties (the superiority of 'our Hartfield pork' was not in dispute), had no park, no woods (like 'my uncle's' in *Mansfield Park*), no home-farm; we do not hear of tenants. This does not reduce it to the level of Maple Grove, at the very gates of Bristol; it does bring it below Mansfield, or Northanger, or Kellynch, or even Longbourn.

The Bennets dined with four-and-twenty families. What society did the Woodhouses enjoy? It suited Jane Austen to limit her canvas to Highbury and its immediate environs; but she seems to have felt the need of some explanation. Mr Woodhouse is made responsible.



(Bath City Council)

Early 19th-Century Evening Dresses

Mr Woodhouse was fond of society in his own way. He liked very much to have his friends come and see him; and from various united causes, from his long residence at Hartfield, and his good nature, from his fortune, his house, and his daughter, he could command the visits of his own little circle, in a great measure as he liked. He had not much intercourse with any families beyond that circle; his horror of late hours and large dinner-parties made him unfit for any acquaintance, but such as would visit him on his own terms. Fortunately for him, Highbury, including Randalls in the same parish, and Donwell Abbey in the parish adjoining, the seat of Mr Knightley, comprehended many such. Not unfrequently, through Emma's persuasion, he had some of the chosen and the best to dine with him, but evening-parties were what he preferred, and, unless he fancied himself at any time unequal to company, there was scarcely an evening in the week in which Emma could not make up a card-table for him.

We are not told who 'the chosen and the best' were; if they lived outside the village, they are never named. Now Emma was a model daughter; but if she had been entitled to associate with the county, we can hardly doubt that her enterprise would have found means to that end. It is perhaps permissible to guess that the Woodhouse lineage was not very old; one might even suspect that Mr Woodhouse's father, at least his grandfather, had prospered in commerce. In this he might resemble Charles Bingley, whose father 'had intended to purchase an estate, but did not live to do it' (like 'old Mr Suckling', father of Mr Elton's brother-in-law). Such a connexion would not be outside Jane Austen's own experience. Her letters show her acquainted with the Kentish Knatchbulls, one of whom, a Sir Edward, married her niece Fanny Knight. But one branch at least of this distinguished family was in the City; there were Knatchbulls in Gracechurch Street and it may have been her knowledge of that fact that made her place Elizabeth Bennet's uncle Gardiner in Gracechurch Street. This connexion afforded entertainment to Bingley's sisters, whose snobbishness reflects their origin, and Darcy himself, who was no snob (he had admitted Bingley to intimacy), was 'surprised' by it though he 'bore it with fortitude' when it was brought under his eyes at Pemberley.

Jane Austen herself was a realist and a woman of the world. She knew that for a century the landed class had often enough repaired its fortunes, and perhaps improved its heredity, by alliance with the families of Sir Andrew Fairport and the like. The illiberal snobbery of Sir Walter Elliot and his like was, as it deserved to be, a target for her keenest satire.

NOTE This essay, apparently written in about 1949, was found among the papers of Dr R. W. Chapman in 1978, and is published with permission.

Jane Austen's Neglected Song Book

by Robert K. Wallace

Patrick Piggott, a musician, has written a book that will delight all readers who love both Jane Austen and music. *The Innocent Diversion: Music in the Life and Writing of Jane Austen* (London: Douglas Cleverdon, 1979) is a masterful survey of the importance of music in the letters and in the fiction; it also provides the first sustained discussion in print of Jane Austen's music books (Mollie Sands had briefly described the books at Chawton in these pages in 1956). Mr Piggott devotes separate chapters to the Chawton Collection and the Second Collection (in the possession of Henry Jenkyns). Splendidly descriptive, these chapters offer an excellent overview of the nature and quality of the music in Jane Austen's possession at Steventon and at Chawton during the two extended periods in her life in which we know that music was, at the least, a daily diversion. Yet these descriptions of the two collections are far from exhaustive, as Mr Piggott several times acknowledges. There simply was not room to comment on everything that he found of interest.

The purpose of the present essay is to call special attention to one of the books in the Chawton Collection. It is a book of songs to which Mr Piggott gives relatively little attention—and with seemingly good reason. Above the handwritten table of contents is written "Austen 1778." Jane Austen was then but three years old. The table of contents lists twenty-seven songs by title and assigns a number to each. The presence of manuscripts is indicated after numbers 17, 19 and 21. Nearly all of the listed, numbered songs are engraved, though three turn out to be manuscripts. All of these engraved songs (Gluck's "Che farò senza Euridice" is number 23) clearly belong to the generation of Jane Austen's parents—and to the vicinity of 1778. This would suggest that the young novelist-to-be, while she may have inherited the book, was much too young to have played any role in assembling its contents.

As Mr Piggott notes, however, one of the manuscript songs is from Storace's *Siege of Belgrade*, which was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre in 1791. He raises the possibility that this song may have been copied out in 1791 or later by Jane Austen herself, who was then sixteen. But he finds that "the manuscript differs in many ways from the clear, elegant writing in the books marked with Jane's own name." He therefore concludes his brief discussion of the "1778" book with a cautious conjecture:

it is possible that the engraved music was bound up in Jane Austen's childhood . . . and that the manuscript pieces were somehow inserted into the book at a later date.

A close examination of the book itself reveals that many of



Assembly Rooms, Bath

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the manuscript insertions *were* made at a later date—many if not all of them by Jane Austen herself. All told, there are some twenty unnumbered manuscript songs inserted among the twenty-seven numbered ones. Their contents will be briefly summarized after some of the evidence is given which links them to Jane Austen herself.

1. The hand-written table of contents, in addition to the twenty-seven numbered songs, the three references to manuscript songs, and the words “Austen 1778” also includes a signature: “Miss Jane Austen.” This book, no less than the others, “is marked with Jane’s own name.” She obviously did not write it in 1778.

2. The three references to manuscript songs are clearly integral to the table of contents itself. And one reference is specific: “Manuscript Songs—Siege of Belgrade.” As this entry must have been made in 1791 or later, so must the entire table of contents of which it is an integral part have been compiled at that time. Presumably it was compiled by the young woman who signed the table of contents.

3. Many of the manuscript songs are undoubtedly in Jane Austen’s own hand. One of the most beautiful musical manuscripts she ever wrote is “Whither Love thy Beauties Bring,” with music by Krumpholtz. It is inserted after item 17 in this book and it displays the strong, clear musical notation evident in later manuscript books universally acknowledged to be in Jane Austen’s hand. This manuscript alone should be of considerable interest to anyone interested in both music and Jane Austen.

4. Four manuscript songs have been added to the book in places not indicated in the table of contents (they are inserted after items 8 and 9). These seem to be further evidence that Jane Austen, having received this book from her elders, continued to add to it herself, probably until she acquired the first of the books into which she could copy her manuscript songs directly.

Of the twenty unnumbered manuscript songs inserted into the “1778” song book, at least eighteen are love songs and a majority of those are songs about lovers who are apart. To a curious degree, most of these songs anticipate either the situation or the mood of Anne Elliot in *Persuasion*. The character of the music, when marked, is “Plaintive,” “Affetuoso,” “Adagio con Espressione.” The words and the notes are consistently poignant. The most interesting songs, perhaps, are the “hidden” ones—the ones whose existence is not even acknowledged in the table of contents. The first one, “Susan,” is addressed to a woman who is separated from the sailor she loves. It begins:

Oh Susan, Susan lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain,
Let me kiss off this falling tear
We only part, to meet again.

The second song is also about parted lovers. It begins:
Why tarries my Love?
Ah! where does he rove?
My Love is long absent from me.

The third "hidden" love song is from Sheridan's "The Stranger" with music by the Duchess of Devonshire. The music is marked "Plaintive" and the opening words show why.

I have a silent sorrow here,
A Grief I'll ne'er impart;
It breathes no Sigh, it sheds no tear,
But it consumes my heart.

Only the fourth of these curiously placed love songs—Philidor's "Ah! que l'amour est chose jolie"—is in a happier vein.

Among the three groups of manuscript songs whose existence is indicated in the contents, "Whither Love thy Beauties Bring" is one of the most interesting both musically and thematically. It is an *Andante con Expressione* of considerable poignance and its theme is dear to the readers of *Persuasion*—the return of a lover's "bloom." The last of all the manuscript songs, "Sure Would Make a Dismal Story," is another song about a soldier apart from the woman he loves. This is also a prominent theme or situation in many of the songs in the manuscript books already acknowledged to be in Jane Austen's hand. Mr Piggott, for example, reproduces a page from Jane Austen's copy of Dibdin's "The Soldier's Adieu" and points out that she has substituted the word "Sailor's" for "Soldier's" in the lyrics. Another song in the same manuscript book, entitled "William," is, in addition to being a disfigurement of a sonata movement by Haydn, a song about a woman watching from high cliffs for the return of the sailor she loves. Curiously, one of the last of the unnumbered manuscript songs inserted into Jane Austen's "1778" song book is another copy of the first stanza of "Susan," the first of the songs "hidden" early in the book and the one that specifically refers to a sailor in stanzas two and three.

There is not room here to speculate in any depth about the possible relationship that these and other songs about parted lovers may have had to the life or the fiction of the woman who wrote *Persuasion*. My main purpose has simply been to call attention to the presence of many such songs in a book that would seem on its surface to contain little of direct interest to students of Jane Austen and her music.

I suggest that those who wish to examine the book begin on the contents page, where the signature "Miss Jane Austen" can be found in the middle of the contents themselves. It fills an empty space that was left below one of the greatest songs about parted lovers ever written: "Gluck's "Che farò senza Euridice." I also suggest a glance at song number 8, the one that immediately

precedes "Susan" and the other "hidden" songs. Written in a manuscript hand almost certainly Jane Austen's own, it begins with the words "How imperfect is expression/Some emotions to impart" and concludes with the words "what broken faulting dying/Language would but cannot tell." Many of the emotions that Jane Austen did not "tell" in language until *Persuasion* are embodied in the words and music of the songs about parted lovers that she inserted into this most intriguing "1778" song book.

JANE AUSTEN STUDIES, 1979

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- BROWN, Julia Prewitt: *Jane Austen's novels: social change and literary form*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1979. pp. 185.
- BYRDE, Penelope: *A frivolous distinction: fashion and needlework in the works of Jane Austen*. Bath: Bath City Council, [1979]. pp. 42.
- CONRAD, Peter: 'Novel choice: Peter Conrad on Emma by Jane Austen', *Observer Magazine* 1 July 1979, 52.
- CRADDOCK, Patricia: 'The almanac of *Sense and Sensibility*', *Notes and Queries* 224 (1979), 222-226.
- DE ROSE, Peter Louis: 'Memory in *Mansfield Park*', *Notes and Queries* 224 (1979), 226-227.
- DRABBLE, Margaret: *A writer's Britain: landscape in literature*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1979. pp. 281.
Jane Austen: pp. 130-133 (the Picturesque) and *passim*.
- EDWARDS, Anne-Marie: *In the steps of Jane Austen: town and country walks*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1979. pp. 112.
- EHRENPREIS, Irving: 'Jane Austen and heroism', *New York Review of Books* 26 (1), 8 February 1979, 37-43.
- FREEDMAN, Francine Susan: "*Ceremonies of life*": *manners in the novels of Jane Austen*. Ph.D. dissertation, Tufts University, 1979. pp. 175. An abstract appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International* 39 (1978-79), 7355-A.
- HOPKINSON, Diana. 'Austens in America', *Country Life* 166 (1979), 468-469.
- IRWIN, Michael: *Picturing: description and illusion in the nineteenth century novel*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979. pp. 161. Jane Austen *passim*.
- JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY: *Report for the year 1978*. Alton: Jane Austen Society, [1979]. pp. 47.
- JONES, Elizabeth Falk: *Ends and means of fictions: 'Hard Times' and 'Mansfield Park'*. Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1979. pp. 216.
An abstract appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International* 39 (1978-79), 6776-A, 6777-A.



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(Jane Austen Memorial Trust)
In **Persuasion**, chapter 16. Sir Walter Elliot recommends the
constant use of **Gowlands** during the spring months.

- KAPLAN, Deborah Ellen: *Structures of statues: eighteenth-century social experience as form in courtesy books and Jane Austen's novels*. Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1979. pp. 295.
An abstract appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International* 39 (1978-79), 7357-A.
- KENNEDY, Alan: *Meaning and signs in fiction*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979. pp. 148.
pp. 58-69: 'Agency and scene in Jane Austen' (on *Mansfield Park*).
- KROEBER, Karl, McGANN, Jerome J. & LANGBAUM, Robert: 'British Romanticism and British Romantic fiction: a forum', *Wordsworth Circle* 10 (1979), 131-146. Jane Austen in relation to Romanticism.
- LAUBER, John: 'Jane Austen and the limits of freedom', *Ariel* 10 (1979), 77-96.
- LE FAYE, Deirdre: 'Jane Austen and her Hancock relatives', *Review of English Studies* NS 30 (1979), 12-27.
- LERNER, Laurence: *Love and marriage: literature and its social context*. London: Edward Arnold, 1979. pp. 264.
Jane Austen: pp. 25-29 (especially on *Persuasion* and *Pride, and Prejudice*).
- LOCK, F. P. 'The geology of *Sense and Sensibility*', *Yearbook of English Studies* 9 (1979), 264-255.
- MAYOUX, Jean-Jacques: 'Entrée de dame dans le roman anglais (Jane Austen rééditée)', *Quinzaine littéraire* 302 (16/31 mai 1979), 13-14.
- MUDRICK, Marvin: *Books are not life but then what is?* New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. pp. 348.
Includes essays on *Mansfield Park* (pp. 310-322) and on *Persuasion* (pp. 323-336).
- PIGGOTT, Patrick: *The innocent diversion: a study of music in the life and writings of Jane Austen*. London: Douglas Cleverdon/The Clover Hill Editions, 1979. pp. 184.
- PRESTON, John. 'The silence of the novel', *Modern Language Review* 74 (1979), 257-267.
Includes discussion of the characters of Fanny Price and Emma Woodhouse.
- ROBERTS, Warren: *Jane Austen and the French Revolution*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979. pp. 224.
- ROWSE, Alfred Leslie: *Portraits and views, literary and historical*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979. pp. 246.
pp. 3-17: 'Jane Austen as social realist' [reprint of 1975 address to the Jane Austen Society].
- RUOFF, Gene W.: 'The sense of a beginning: *Mansfield Park* and Romantic narrative', *Wordsworth Circle* 10 (1979), 174-186.

SEIDEL, Kathleen Gilles: *How novels end: a study of Henry Fielding and Jane Austen*. Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1979. pp. 290.

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TATHAM, Michael: 'Mary Crawford and the comic heroine'. *New Blackfriars* 60 (1979), 11-26.

SUPPLEMENT FOR 1978

BOMPIANI, Ginevra: *Lo spazio narrante: Jane Austen. Emily Brontë, Sylvia Plath*. Milano: La Tartaruga, 1978. pp. 181. Jane Austen: pp. 11-57.

CHENG, Yung-hsiao T.: 'Clergymen in Jane Austen's novels', *Fu Jen Studies: Literature & Linguistics* (Taipei) 11 (1978), 25-40.

DE ROSE, Peter Louis: 'Marriage and self-knowledge in *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice*', *Renascence* 30 (1978), 199-216.

DEVOR, Alice Noyes: *Jane Austen—student and teacher: a study of Jane Austen's use of educational ideas in her novels*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1978. pp. 305.

An abstract appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International* 39 (1978-79), 4272-A.

FOSBERY, M. W.: 'Jane Austen's Fanny Price', *Cambridge Quarterly* 8 (1978), 113-128.

HAWKES, Daniel: *Jane Austen: heroines and horizons*. Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey (New Brunswick), 1978. pp. 255.

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HOPKINS, Robert: 'General Tilney and affairs of state: the political Gothic of *Northanger Abbey*', *Philological Quarterly* 57 (1978), 213-224.

KILROY, G. J. F.: 'Ironical balance in *Persuasion*', *Downside Review* 91 (1978), 305-313.

LOCKWOOD, Thomas: 'Divided attention in *Persuasion*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 33 (1978-79), 309-323.

MACDONAGH, Oliver: 'Highbury and Chawton: social convergence in *Emma*', *Historical Studies* 18 (April 1978), 37-51.

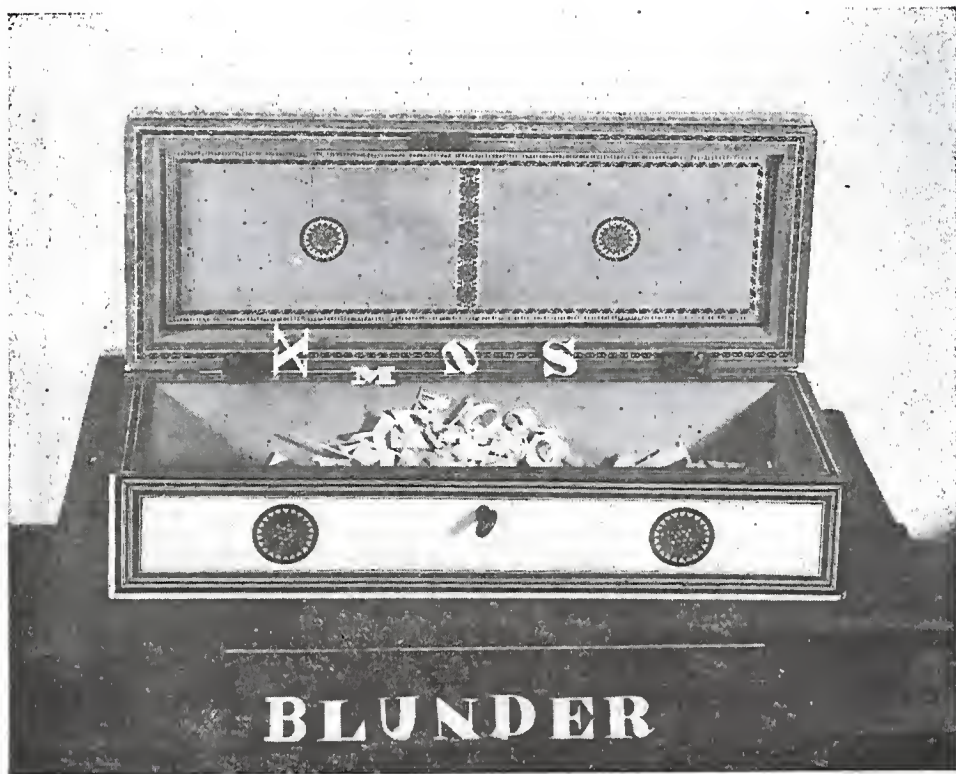
MACDONALD, Susan Peck: 'Passivity and the female role in *Pride and Prejudice*', *Women & Literature* 6 (2) (1978), 35-46.

MIDGLEY, Winifred: 'A link with Jane Austen', *Farnham & District Museum Society Newsletter* 5 (1) (March 1978), 21-22. Henry Austen and Farnham.

MONAGHAN, David: 'Mansfield Park and Evangelicalism: a reassessment', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 33 (1978-79), 215-230.

OLSEN, Bruce: 'The empiricism of the imitator', *Language and Style* 11 (1978), 181-187.

On John Coates' 1958 continuation of *The Watsons*.



(Jane Austen Memorial Trust)

In *Emma*, Vol. III chapter 5. Frank Churchill asks.
 "Miss Woodhouse, have your nephews taken away their alphabet -
 their box of letters?"

PARIS, Bernard J.: *Character and conflict in Jane Austen's novels: a psychological approach*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978. pp. 208.

PENRITH, Mary: 'Forms of address and reference in *Emma*', *University of Cape Town Studies in English* 8 (1978), 34-45.

ROGAL, Samuel J.: 'Meals abounding: Jane Austen at table', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 4 (1978), 71-75.

ROTHMEL, Steven Zachary: *Similarities in the novelistic technique of Jane Austen and Henry James*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1978. pp. 179.

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- STERNBERG, Meir: *Expositional modes and temporal ordering in fiction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978. pp. 338.
Chapter 5, pp. 129-158, is devoted to *Pride and Prejudice*.
- TATHAM, Michael: 'Mary Crawford and the Christian heroine', *New Blackfriars* 59 (1978), 262-268.
- WELTY, Eudora: *The eye of the story: selected essays and reviews*. New York: Random House, 1978. pp. 355.
pp. 3-13: 'The radiance of Jane Austen'.

David Gilson

Books acquired in 1979

Presented by Mr Michael Chapman, as the gift of the late Mrs R. W. Chapman:

- AUSTEN, Jane: *Pride and Prejudice*. Edited with introduction, etc. by K. M. Metcalfe. London: Oxford University Press, 1912.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *Northanger Abbey*. Edited with introduction and appendix by K. M. Metcalfe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *The letters of Jane Austen, selected with an introduction by R. Brimley Johnson*. London: John Lane The Bodley Head Ltd., 1925.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *Jane Austen's letters to her sister Cassandra and others, collected and edited by R. W. Chapman*. 2 vols. [in one, on India paper]. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *Volume the First, now first printed from the manuscript in the Bodleian Library*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933. One of 100 special copies.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *Love & Freindship and other early works, now first printed from the original MS.* [London]: Chatto & Windus, 1922.
No. 196 of 260 copies on handmade paper.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *Lady Susan, now reprinted from the manuscript*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925.
One of 250 copies on handmade paper.
- AUSTEN, Jane: *The Watsons, now reprinted from the manuscript*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927.
One of 250 copies on handmade paper.

- AUSTEN, Jane: [*Sanditon*] *Fragment of a novel, now first printed from the manuscript*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925.
One of 250 copies on handmade paper.
- OULTON, L.: *The Watsons, by Jane Austen, concluded by L. Oulton*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1923.
- COATES, John: *The Watsons: Jane Austen's fragment continued and completed by John Coates*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1958.
- ALDINGTON, Richard: *Jane Austen*. Pasadena, California: The Ampersand Press, 1948.
- AUSTEN-LEIGH, James Edward: *Memoir of Jane Austen: with introduction, notes & index by R. W. Chapman*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926.
- BAILEY, John: *Introductions to Jane Austen*. London: Oxford University Press, 1931.
- MUDRICK, Marvin: *Jane Austen: irony as defense and discovery*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1952.
- RAWLENCE, Guy: *Jane Austen*. London: Duckworth, 1934.
- THOMSON, Clara Linklater: *Jane Austen: a survey*. London: Horace Marshall & Son, 1929.

The majority of these books formerly belonged to Dr R. W. Chapman; some have his book-label, and notes by him, or presentation inscriptions to him from the authors.

Presented by Miss FitzHerbert:

- AUSTEN, Jane: *Lady Susan and The Watsons, with an introduction by John Bailey*. London: Eldon Press, 1939.
- KAYE-SMITH, Sheila & Stern, G.B.: *Talking of Jane Austen*. London: Cassell, 1943.
- SMITH, Goldwin: *Life of Jane Austen*. London: Walter Scott, 1890.

Presented by Dr. F. P. Lock:

- ISAACS, Enid: *In Jane Austen's country*. Canberra: Mulini Press, 1975.

Dame Anna Neagle has presented to the Society a complete set of Jane Austen's novels in the Adelphi Edition. The copy of *Emma* was annotated by Dame Anna when preparing her part for the play.

Notes on Auction Sales

1978-79

A *Manuscripts*. Lot 296 in Sotheby's sale of 13/14 March 1979 was a manuscript apparently in Jane Austen's hand, of the verses on Mr. Gell and Miss Gill (*Minor works*, p.444), formerly belonging to Dr R. W. Chapman; this sold for £520. The same sale included a number of autograph letters to Dr. Chapman from famous contemporaries, some mentioning Jane Austen (Lot 232, Edmund Gosse, 5 letters, £90; Lot 237, Stanley Morison, 6 letters, £120; Lot 372, E. M. Forster, 3 letters and a postcard, £220; Lot 417, C. S. Lewis, 4 letters, £130), and also, Lot 473, a series of 32 letters from Charlotte Mary Yonge to Jane Austen's great-niece Fanny Caroline Lefroy, during the years 1857 to 1861, discussing Fanny's contributions to *The Monthly Packet* (a periodical edited by C. M. Yonge)—these letters sold for £480.

Sotheby's sale of 19/20 July 1979 included, Lot 437, copies of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* published in Routledge's Sixpenny Novels series, ca. 1883, from Dr Chapman's collection, previously the property of A. E. Housman, with Housman's markings and corrections of misprints (cf. R. W. Chapman, *Jane Austen: a critical bibliography*, 2nd ed., 1955, p. 57). These sold for £25.

B *First and early editions*. A copy of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814, in a worn contemporary half binding (lacking both the half-titles in Vols. 2 and 3 and also the advertisement leaf in Vol. 3), was Lot 60 at Sotheby's on 19 February 1979 and sold for £320. A copy of the second edition of *Mansfield Park* 1816, with the half-titles, in contemporary half dark blue roan, Lot 180 at Sotheby's on 21/22 May 1979, sold for £95.

A copy of the first edition of *Emma* 1816 in original paper boards, rebeked, was offered as Lot 119 at Christie's, South Kensington, on 22 September 1978, but was unsold; it appeared again at Christie's (King Street) on 30 May 1979, Lot 190, when it sold for £900.

A copy of the first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818, with the half-titles, in contemporary half calf rebeked, with the bookplate of Oliver Brett, Viscount Esher, was Lot 61 at Sotheby's on 19 February 1979 and sold for £450.

Supplement to the 1977-78 Notes: Lot 18 at Swann Galleries, New York on 4 May 1978 was a first edition of *Emma* in contemporary half calf with all half-titles; this sold for \$800. Lot 19 in the same sale was a first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* in old half calf, which sold for \$300.

David Gilson

Address given by Lord David Cecil
at the Annual General Meeting

Jane Austen—A Summing Up

Twice before, I have had the honour of addressing the Jane Austen Society: and during last year I have also published a book about Jane Austen! In consequence, I have little new to say about her. All I can do is to try to sum up what, for me, are the distinguishing qualities of her genius: also to set it in a perspective in which it can be rightly understood. For, as I discovered when preparing my book, there are some recent critics who do not understand her. Just because the characters in her books are still so alive, they treat these books as if they were the work of a contemporary authoress and interpret them accordingly.

This is to interpret them wrongly. Jane Austen lived one hundred and fifty odd years ago in a world unlike ours; and was – in so far as she was not a genius – representative of her age and her world. A quiet 18th-century country lady who wrote primarily to give herself and her readers rational enjoyment, she succeeded not only with her contemporaries but with posterity too. But there is no sign that she anticipated posterity's viewpoint. What then are the qualities that have made her a living classic?

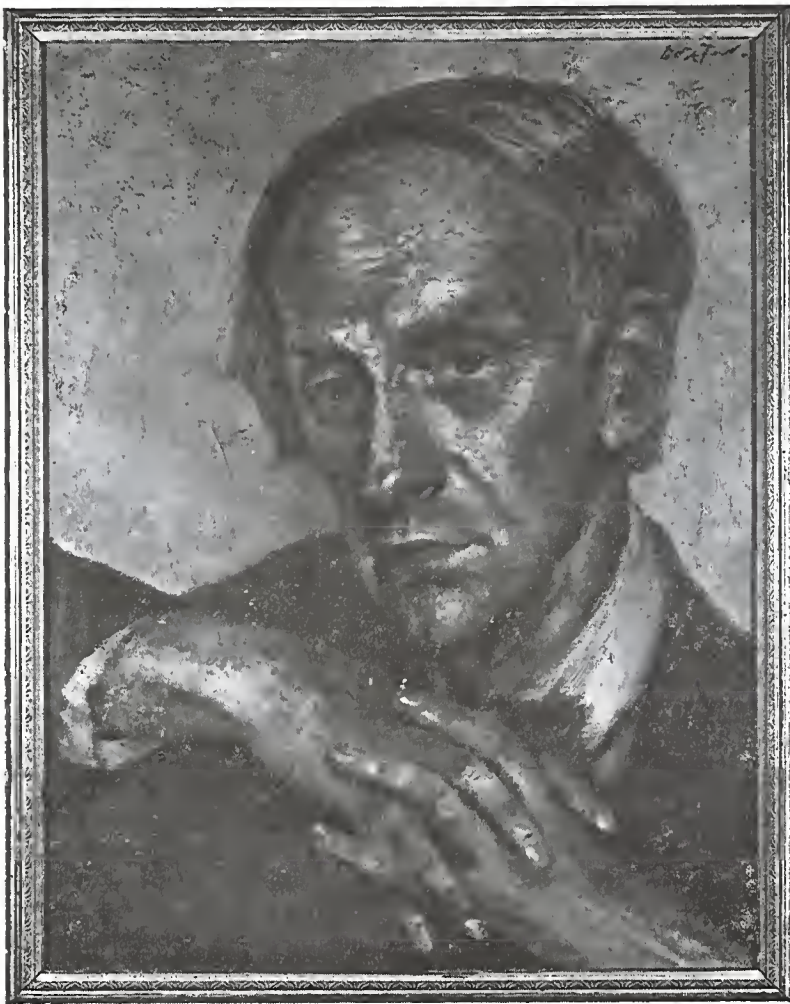
One answer is that, as very few novelists have done, she understood and kept the laws governing her art. In particular, she realised what she could do and stuck to doing it: she stayed within the range of her imaginative inspiration. This was all the more remarkable because it was, on the face of it, a narrow range, limited on the one hand by her experience and on the other by the nature of her talent. Her experience was that of a woman whose life was confined to the area of the private and the domestic. Her heroines are portrayed only in relation to their families, their neighbours and their prospective husbands. So much for her subject matter. How did she treat it? From what angle did she survey it? Here we come to the limit imposed by the nature of her talent. It was primarily a humorous talent. Jane Austen's books are first of all comedies. As a child she wrote skits: her last and unfinished book *Sanditon* is broadly comic. The spirit of comedy pervades all her mature work.

Such then is her range; social and domestic life seen from a feminine and comedy angle. This excludes a great deal of human life; public figures, foreign countries, above all the male world. She also excludes anything she could not see, in part at least, as matter for amusement. There are no deaths or serious crimes in her books "let other pens dwell on guilt and misery" she declares "I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can." The spirit of

comedy also pervades her view of character. We laugh with her characters or at them; in either case they are matter for laughter. Some of her heroines are amusing like Elizabeth Bennet, some are ridiculous like Catherine Morland. Some are both like Emma. The one exception is Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park*. She has no humour and Jane Austen hesitates to laugh much at her. I must confess that the result for me—though not for everybody—is that Fanny is not a complete success. She is real enough; but the impression she makes is dim and priggish in a way that Jane Austen can hardly have intended.

The comic spirit also hampers Jane Austen's power to express strong emotion: her sense of irony hinders her openly. Generally she avoids the occasion for it. We are only allowed to hear one of her heroes propose and that is the self-controlled Mr Knightly whose sentiments are more deep than passionate. It is not that Jane Austen could not convey feeling, all her stories are love stories and the emotion in them is always convincing. Ardent Marianne, faithful Anne Elliot—these two are wonderfully true pictures of girls in love: but we never hear either proclaiming her emotion openly. It is conveyed by the way it shows itself in her actions. Jane Austen's range is also limited by her experience. She writes only of her own social class, she never describes any long scene in which no woman is present. Her heroes are described as seen by her heroines which means only in part and from the outside. Yet Jane Austen turned all these limitations to her advantage. Just because she confined herself strictly to the world she could vitalize fully, every inch of her picture is vital. I would add that society she described, though limited was not dull. The Austens were a clever cultivated family with clever cultivated friends. The 18th-century gentry at its most civilised was amongst the most agreeable societies that England ever produced. In this respect Jane Austen was lucky.

Besides sticking to her range, Jane Austen solved a special problem facing the novelist: she reconciled reality with imagination. The novel, unlike the fantasy, purports to give an illusion of real life in the real world. Yet if it is to be good art it should also be interesting and significant. This is not an easy combination to achieve: real life all too often is insignificant and dull. Many good novels fail to satisfy both obligations. Their picture is either convincing but drab or exciting but unreal. Not so Jane Austen's: her picture contrives to be at the same time true and enjoyable. It is true because she observes reality so accurately. It is enjoyable because we are made to see it through her amused eyes, quick to note any absurd aspect it may present. Her angle of vision is one from which the comic elements in a scene are always visible. They are further emphasised by the words in which she describes them. The scene is made to sparkle by her crisp, deft, ironic style. Thus she imposes the comic mood.



Lord David Cecil by Sir Cecil Beaton.
reproduced by permission of
The Warden, New College, Oxford.

Jane Austen's unsleeping sense of comedy, however, is not enough to account for her reputation; nor is her extraordinary mastery of her art. The books that last are more than just entertaining and accomplished. They are also illuminating: people read them to learn about life: they endure because they have enduring significance. Certainly this is true of Jane Austen's. In the first place her characters have not dated. They are like people we know. There is something universal about them. It is true that they are seen only in a private aspect. But this, morally, is a profound aspect. An employer may know most about a man's talents: it is his family who know most about his temper. Again little episodes can reveal big facts. A tea-party can reveal selfishness and vanity as much as can an election campaign. To perceive them indeed needs a discerning eye that can pierce below surface manners. Jane Austen had such an eye. Along with her comedy sense, her outstanding characteristic is a penetrating insight into moral character; an eye that nothing escapes or misleads. Clearly she was fond of Fanny Price and very sorry for her: but this does not prevent her noticing when jealousy sharpens her disapproval of Mary Crawford. Though she is on Fanny's side, she notes her weakness. Jane Austen is alarmingly fair. The consistent irony of her attitude means that she never idealizes. "Pictures of perfection make me sick and wicked" she once said and there are no such pictures in her book. She is fair to bad people too. Mrs. Norris is odious; but Jane Austen notes that the same meddling energy that can make her disagreeable would have made her a better wife to an impecunious sailor than was her amiable, but weaker, sister Mrs. Price.

Further, so searching a view gives her an insight into what is fundamental. Her picture is not a particular society but essential human nature as shewn in that society. Her books live because they describe essential human nature. Mrs. Bennet stands for all silly snobbish mothers, Miss Bates for all kindly bores; when Mr. Woodhouse says of his grandchildren that they are "remarkably clever—they come and stand by my chair and say 'Grandpapa can you give me a bit of string,'" he speaks for all doting grandparents.

Finally—and this is the second fact which gives Jane Austen's work a universal significance—it is related to universal standards of value. Like all great comedians Jane Austen satirizes in relation to a general view of life. As I have said, it was the view of the 18th century society to which she and her family belonged. It might be called the moral-realistic view whose most famous exponent was Dr. Johnson. The morality was that of Anglican Christianity. Jane Austen—it was one of the most important facts about her—was a devout Christian. This is not always realised because it does not appear openly in her books. This is partly because they were social comedies and partly because she and

her family were reserved in such matters. But the records show that the Austens were exceptionally pious and Jane as pious as any. Though a sturdy patriot, it is noteworthy that her piety was stronger than her patriotism. After the retreat from Corunna, the last words of Sir John Moore, the dying English general, were "I hope the people of England will be satisfied." Jane commented, a little sadly, to her sister "I wish Sir John had united some of the Christian with the hero in his death." In his last hours, she felt, he should have thought of God rather than his country. Her piety was shewn movingly on her own deathbed. Day after day with one of her clergyman brothers, she read and prayed so as to prepare herself for death. Moreover she left some prayers written for her private devotions which demonstrate the strength and sincerity of her religious life.

Her morality derived from her religion. She took for granted that man should live to be sincere, unselfish, disinterested, unworldly. But—just because she took it so seriously—virtue must be tested by how far it worked, it must be judged by standards of realistic good sense. She had no romantic weakness for good feelings as such. She was against unpractical idealists and well-meaning sentimentalists. Love itself must be justified by reason and disciplined by self-control. Next to virtue and good sense come a third standard, taste. Jane Austen thought that how you lived was only second in importance as to what you lived for. Good people were all the better for being good-mannered. Life at Mansfield Park was preferable to life in Fanny's Portsmouth home because of its superior "elegance, harmony, regularity and propriety." Belief in these three standards permeate Jane Austen's work. Though she does not preach about them—she wrote to entertain—they were so fundamental to her view of life that her every conception is related to them. Every character is brought before her to be judged by them and this judgment is smiling but relentless. Henry Crawford passes the test on sense and taste but he fails on virtue: Marianne Dashwood passes on virtue and taste but fails on good sense. Jane Austen applies the standard of taste equally strictly. Miss Bates is a kindly old spinster but a bore. Jane Austen is just to her good qualities and rebukes Emma for laughing at her. She leaves us in no doubt that Miss Bates was boring.

Her view of life shows also in the design of her books. They fall into three groups. In *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility*, she satirizes the "romantic" view of life which was growingly popular during her lifetime. Jane Austen was against Romanticism because it referred its judgments to the verdict of heart and imagination rather than to those of sense and principle. *Northanger Abbey* laughs at its heroine because she expected life to be like her favourite romances. *Sense and Sensibility* contrasts Marianne who judges by the heart with her sister Elinor who

thinks that the movements of the heart should be disciplined by good sense and moral principle. The second group, *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice*, are pure comedies. *Pride and Prejudice* shows the foolishness of trusting to first impressions uncorrected by further observation and reflection. *Emma* illustrates the ironic results of self-deception: Emma, though the cleverest person in her world is led by this cleverness to be over-confident, with the result that she tries to manage the lives of others without pausing to try and understand their characters or even her own. The third group, *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*, are less strictly comic in subject. *Mansfield Park* shows the bad results of worldliness and selfishness, more especially when they are fostered by a bad education. *Persuasion*, Jane Austen's last book, is a little different. In it she has learnt to concede more to the claims of feeling. Anne Elliot from an unwise prudence and the persuasions of a friend has renounced Wentworth whom she loved. The story shows she has made a mistake. This is not fundamentally inconsistent with Jane Austen's established principles. Anne should have accepted Wentworth not from passion but because she would have been right to trust her happiness to so good a man.

Their intellectual and moral foundations make Jane Austen's books more impressive than they might appear at first sight. These quiet and domestic comedies propose universal issues. Prime Ministers have been self-deceived in the same way as Emma was. Worldliness and selfishness have brought misfortune on whole societies as they did on the Bertram family. Jane Austen's Christianity and Christian moral standards, though only implied in her books, are always there to give a formidable breadth and strength. I noted with interest that some critics of my books complained that my picture of her and her novels was too serene and confident, they suggested that I played down what they called her "darker side." In answer I would say that Jane Austen's life was not improbably serene. Her story discloses that it was not free from the griefs and frustrations and disappointments commonly inseparable from the human condition. But this did not mean that her view of life was consequently unhappy in the sense of troubled and dissatisfied. Here it is that these critics treat her too much as a contemporary. Some modern authoresses might react to a life like Jane Austen's in a dissatisfied spirit. She did not; partly because she had grown up happy in a happy home and partly because of her faith. This taught her to accept trouble as a necessary feature of a fallen world but that she must not therefore lose heart, since she was ultimately under the protection of an all-powerful and loving God. I noticed that those critics who disbelieved in her happiness never mentioned her faith. In fact, this faith combined with her unquenchable sense of comedy, to give her a built-in confidence in living, a strong amused serenity of spirit, which—especially in a disturbed period like the present—makes her books peculiarly heartening.

At least I find them so.

The Vote of Thanks proposed by Miss Margaret Lane
(Countess of Huntingdon)

In listening to Lord David's informal and enchanting monologue on Jane Austen—which seemed much more like listening to his own interior thoughts, rather than a prepared address—it struck me, not for the first time, how much we owe Lord David, both as an illuminating writer on our subject, and also, for the last 15 years, as President of our society.

I remember, a good many years ago, reading an article in the T.L.S. by John Sparrow on the possibility that Jane Austen might, through the Hicks-Beaches, have met Sydney Smith, the delightful Smith of Smiths, in Bath, and that he might possibly have been the model for that equally witty and amusing young clergyman, Henry Tilney of *Northanger Abbey*. I was reminded of the article—which by chance I had kept, tucked inside the cover of Elizabeth Jenkins' *Jane Austen*—when I came to read—and with what pleasure—Lord David's *Portrait of Jane Austen* last year. That portrait—a living likeness difficult to catch and most beautifully brought off—is a great achievement. No detail of his subject escapes him, and here was Warden Sparrow's theory reconsidered, and given its due before being regretfully dismissed, as lacking in real evidence. To accept it, Lord David wrote, might be 'yielding to a temptation that often besets biographers, namely to put forward a view on insufficient grounds just because I should like it to be true.'

This naturally put into my mind the regret—the rules of time being what they are—that Jane Austen could never have met Lord David Cecil, or studied him as the model for one of her characters. I've known him myself for a long time, from those halcyon days when he was a young don at Oxford and I was an undergraduate, and from my first reading his observations on Jane Austen it struck me how perfectly he would have fitted into her world.

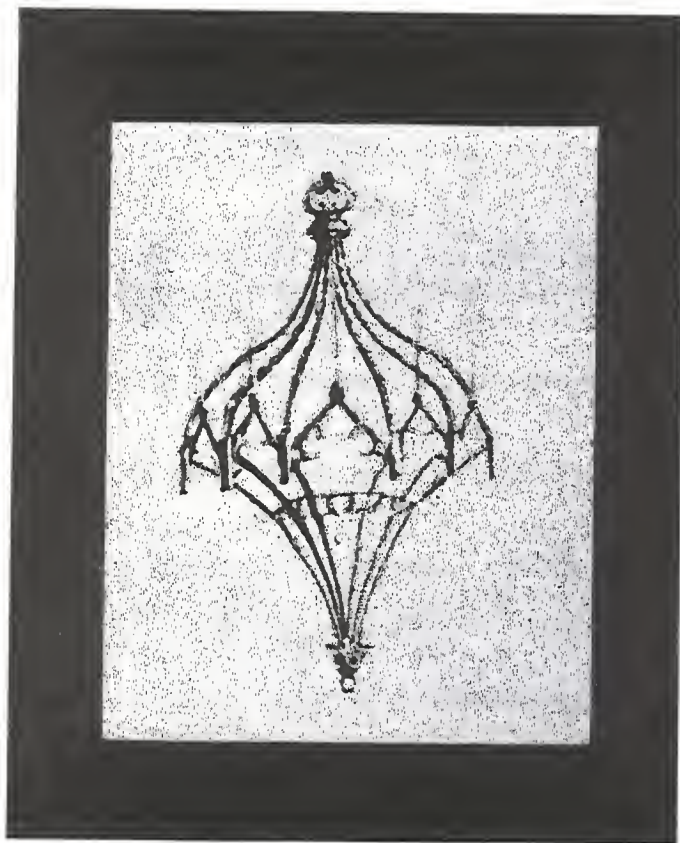
Though there are many clergymen, and some aristocratic owners of great houses, I don't think there's a professor or university don among any of her characters though there are two Oxford undergraduates, I remember—Catherine Morland's brother and the insufferable John Thorpe. And what a delightful figure of one she could have made, if she had only known our President! The civilised background so very much to her taste: the studiousness: the addiction to learning and to libraries: the achievements as writer and lecturer: the rapid speech and characteristic gesture. And behind all this, the charming old house in a quiet Dorset village, with its walled garden and its apple trees, and its history of a long and happy marriage and a family of talented children. Given the opportunity, I think Jane

Austen could have found enough charm, wit, perhaps even endearing eccentricity in her subject to have produced a learned rival to Henry Tilney, or even to my own favourite, Mr. Knightley.

So, it's with a particularly appreciative sense of our President's belonging to, and being a part of, his subject, in a very rare and special way, that I propose a vote of thanks to Lord David Cecil.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1980



Early 19th-Century Gas Chandelier

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

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Vice-President

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £3,
and a single payment of £25 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1980

Membership

There were 123 new members during the year, of whom 53 became Life Members, as did 21 old members. There are now 1,782 individual members, as well as 44 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £3 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in Sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, at Chawton House, on Saturday, 19th July. Nearly 600 members and their friends were present. Lord David Cecil presided, and asked that the Minutes of the last Annual Meeting be taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Report for 1979. He read a letter from Mrs Edward Knight thanking the Society for renovating the wrought iron gates leading to the kitchen garden at Chawton House. The proposition was seconded by Mrs E. B. Carling, and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts. He said that the Society's income no longer covered expenses, and proposed that as from 1st January, 1981 Life Membership should be increased to £25, and the Annual Subscription to £3. This was seconded by Mrs J. Freeman, and carried.

Professor Sir David Smithers proposed that Lord David Cecil be re-elected as President of the Society, Mr John Gore Vice-President, and Sir Hugh Smiley Chairman. This was seconded by Mrs Hilary Ward, and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The address was given by Miss Elizabeth Jenkins, which she modestly called 'Some Notes on Background'.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Judge Gilbert Leslie, seconded by Dr Frank Tait, and carried.

The meeting was closed by the President thanking Major and Mrs. Edward Knight for lending Chawton House for the meeting once more.

Annual General Meeting 1981

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on **Saturday, 25th July**. This is a week later than usual, and is at the request of the Friends of Winchester Cathedral, who will be celebrating their Golden Jubilee with the annual festival on our usual Saturday, when our dates have often clashed.

The address will be given by Professor Laurence Lerner, of the University of Sussex.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, a Study and Research Group has been set up, which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, Orchard Lodge, Riverview Road, Pangbourne, Berks.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of Jane Austen in Bath, by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Selborne Bookshop, Alton, Hampshire.

Price: 40p (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-75

The second volume of Collected Reports is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £7.50, post free.

Jane Austen Studies

Rises in printing and postal costs unfortunately make it uneconomic for David Gilson's annual list to continue to appear in these pages. Mr Gilson is, however, willing to continue to supply this information at cost to those members (whether personal or institutional) who may find it useful; such members are asked to communicate with him (at 51 Blenheim Drive, Oxford, OX2 8DL), preferably with return postage. Upon the extent of demand for this service will depend its cost, presentation &c. Mr Gilson has compiled a new bibliography of Jane Austen, to be published by Oxford University Press in the 'Soho Bibliographies' series, probably in 1982; he envisages future lists of Jane Austen studies as forming also a continuing supplement

to this work (which will contain sections devoted to original editions, first American editions, translations, editions published by Richard Bentley, other later editions, minor works, letters, dramatisations, continuations and completions, books owned by Jane Austen, miscellaneous items, and biography and criticism).

Notes on Auction Sales

1979-80

A Manuscripts. No relevant manuscripts are known to have been sold. It should be noted that the letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge to Fanny Caroline Lefroy, Lot 473 at Sotheby's on 13/14 March 1979, mentioned in the 1978-79 Notes, were not in fact sold, but were returned to their owner.

B First and early editions A first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811, with the half-titles, in contemporary half calf with some minor defects, was Lot 63 at Christie's on 26th March 1980 and sold for £580.

A copy of the second edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1813, with the half-titles, contemporary mottled calf, with some defects, was Lot 296 at Sotheby's on 28/29 July 1980, sold for £100.

A first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814 was Lot 60 at Christie's on 26th March 1980; this had half-titles misbound after the title-pages and was in a contemporary half calf binding with the booklabel of Michael Sadleir - it sold for £300.

A first edition of *Emma* 1816 was Lot 59 in the same sale at Christie's, lacking the half-titles in Vols. 1 and 3 and with minor damage to some leaves and to the contemporary half red morocco binding; it sold for £220.

The Christie's sale also included two first editions of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818, Lots 61 and 62. Lot 61, in contemporary half calf rebaked, had half-titles misbound before the general titles in Vols. 2-4 and sold for £140, while Lot 62, with no half-titles in Vols. 3 and 4 and with that of Vol. 2 misbound before the general title, in a somewhat worn contemporary half calf binding, sold for £220. David Borowitz's copy of the same works, previously reported (in the 1977-78 Notes) as sold at Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, on 15th November 1977, Lot 6, \$375, came up for sale again at Christie's, New York, on 26th November 1979, Lot 131, and sold on this occasion for \$450 (it was in contemporary half calf with the half-titles).

Supplement to the 1978-79 Notes A first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814, lacking the half-titles, in a half calf binding with some covers detached, was Lot 213 at Phillips, Son & Neale on 16th January 1979 and sold for £170. A first edition of *Northanger*

Abbey and Persuasion 1818, in half calf without the half-titles, was Lot 118 at Sotheby's on 11th December 1978 and sold for £200.

David Gilson

Woodhouse of Hartfield

In the last, 1979, Annual Report we printed an article by the late Dr R. W. Chapman, in which he considered the social status of the Woodhouse family. This produced letters from two members of the Society, Lady Violet Powell and Miss Landy Badock, with identical reactions to the article.

The article had been found among Dr Chapman's papers by his son, who had given us permission to reproduce it. Both ladies suggested that Dr Chapman had never published the essay because he possibly had forgotten a passage from **Emma**, which answers the very question he discussed, and which reads as follows:

'He (Mr Elton) must know that the Woodhouses had been settled for several generations at Hartfield, the younger branch of a very ancient family-and that the Eltons were nobody. The landed property of Hartfield certainly was inconsiderable, being but a sort of notch in the Donwell Abbey estate, to which all the rest of Highbury belonged; but their fortune, from other sources, was such as to make them scarcely secondary to Donwell Abbey itself, in every other kind of consequence; and the Woodhouses had long held a high place in the consideration of the neighbourhood which Mr Elton had first entered not two years ago, to make his way as he could, without any alliances but in trade, or any thing to recommend him to notice but his situation and his civility- '.

(**Emma**. Edited by R. W. Chapman, Oxford University Press. Third Edition 1933. p 136)

Jane Austen's Southampton Piano

I owe to Mr George Holbert Tucker, of Norfolk, Virginia, my knowledge of the existence of a page torn, or perhaps cut, from an account book dated 1807 which contains a list of personal expenses written in what is considered by reliable authorities to be Jane Austen's hand. This precious manuscript, now in the Department of Autograph Manuscripts of the Pierpont Morgan Library of New York, and here reproduced by permission of the Director, Mr C. A. Ryskamp, was formerly in the collection of the late Mrs Alberta Burke, of Baltimore, Maryland, whose gift to the Jane Austen Society of a lock of Jane Austen's hair is among the society's most treasured possessions.

It was in a kind letter to me, written after he had read my book, **The Innocent Diversion, music in the life and writings of Jane Austen**, that Mr Tucker called my attention to the manuscript in question. He rightly believed that it would be of special interest to me since it contains an item which makes clear that Jane Austen hired a 'Piano Forte' in the year 1807 at a cost of £2/13/6. This throws quite a new light on the place of music in her life during the years between the sale of her piano for a mere eight guineas in 1801, when the Austens left Steventon for Bath and her purchase of another instrument ("as good a one as can be bought for thirty guineas") in, or shortly after, 1808, when Mrs Austen and her two daughters moved from Southampton to Chawton.

In the tenth chapter of my book I mentioned that there exists no evidence that the Austens replaced Jane's piano with a new one when they furnished their home in Bath. But now that we know Jane Austen hired a piano during the period when, with her mother and sister, she shared a house in Southampton with the family of her brother, Frank, we may infer that she hired, or her father hired for her, a piano during the Bath years as well. While Mr Austen lived, the family, though its income was narrow, would certainly have been better able to afford a few pounds a year for the hire of a piano than after his death had greatly reduced the Austen ladies' circumstances.

It is probable, therefore, that Jane Austen was able to keep her 'piano fingers' supple and active on hired instruments during the eight years when I had imagined her to be without the means to enjoy that private practice which we know to have been a solace and perhaps an inspiration to her at Steventon and Chawton. It is likely, too, that part of her collection of music was acquired during the Bath and Southampton years. Certainly while in Bath she would have access to the latest London publications at either of the Loder family's flourishing music shops in Milsom Street and Orange Grove.

This is not the place for a detailed consideration of all the various expenses listed in the extremely interesting document reproduced on p. 147, tempting though it is to wonder about some of them, such as the journey which cost £1/2/10, concerning which I have no other information, or the indisposition which obliged her to buy some medicine for 1/1½. And why did she have to give 13/9 to servants? Tips, perhaps? The largest outlays are, predictably, 'cloathes' and washing—Jane Austen was always deeply interested in 'cloathes'—but it is rather surprising that her personal resources in the year 1807 allowed her to spend as much as £44/10/6 and still have £6/4/6 in hand.

There can be no doubt that a close analysis of the information on both sides of the page torn, or perhaps cut, from Jane Austen's

account book (probably the very Pocketbook which itself appears in the list of expenses—she paid 1/4 for it) will be undertaken by other pens than mine. I am concerned only with the, to me, important fact that active music-making seems to have remained an unbroken thread in her pattern of daily life, as much in Southampton, and probably in Bath too, as in the Hampshire villages where her most important work was done.

Patrick Piggott

Parasols

When Tom Bertram went down to Ramsgate and met the two daughters of Mrs. Sneyd he thought them 'both well dressed, with veils and parasols like other girls'. Bonnet veils and sunshades were, in fact, very fashionable accessories to a woman's outdoor dress when Jane Austen began writing *Mansfield Park* in 1811 and there are other references to parasols in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sanditon*. Lydia Bennet, perhaps not surprisingly, on her visit to Brighton managed to acquire a new gown and a new parasol 'which she would have described more fully, but was obliged to leave off in a violent hurry', but even her sister Elizabeth did not venture out for a walk in the garden with Lady Catherine de Bourgh without first 'running into her own room for her parasol'.

Jane Austen's references to parasols are certainly not numerous but they are of some interest for the study of dress. As an accessory to everyday wear the parasol was a comparatively recent innovation; although examples may be found in French fashion plates of the late seventeenth century, they do not appear regularly in England until the last quarter of the eighteenth century and at first were regarded as a novelty. In the 1790's, however, the change in dress styles to lighter, simpler gowns and straighter skirts probably made the parasol easier to handle and by 1800 it was not only a fashionable but an indispensable item in a woman's wardrobe. In May 1801, for example, Jane Austen went for a long walk from Bath to Weston village 'under a fine hot sun' and was amazed that Mrs. Chamberlayne should be 'without any parasol or any shade to her hat'.

There are many illustrations of parasols in the fashion plates of the period and they appear to be both charming and elegant articles of dress. The canopies were usually made of silk, often trimmed with knotted fringe or tassels and might match the gown or pelisse. The handles were mostly long and slender (though short handles were also used) and some were delicately carved in wood, ivory or mother-of-pearl. From 1800 to 1820 the canopy was moderate in size and either domed or pagoda shaped. The pagoda shape (forming an ogee curve when open) was particularly popular, possibly reflecting the later eighteenth century taste for Chinoiserie and exotic decoration. At this date the ribs were



Parasols in the early 19th Century



(Bath City Council)

almost invariably made of whalebone, with supporting spokes of metal. Some parasols had hinged sticks which allowed the canopy to be tilted vertically to shade the face. It is interesting to note that in many illustrations the parasol is held from the top rather than by the handle when not in use. Despite the disadvantage of a dusty handle this appears to have been the custom until about 1820. Some late eighteenth century walking sticks had been combined with an umbrella or sunshade and these were used in the same way.

Unlike the umbrella, the parasol was an almost exclusively feminine item, but although decorative, it was designed to be functional and served to protect the face and hands from the sun. A light, clear complexion was admired at this date and Sir Walter Elliot was probably not the only man (or woman) to find freckles unattractive. 'Freckles do not disgust me so very much as they do him', said his daughter Elizabeth. 'I have known a face not materially disfigured by a few, but he abominates them. You must have heard him notice Mrs Clay's freckles.' In **Sanditon** Mr and Mrs Parker were prepared for the hot sunshine at the seaside: 'you can get a parasol at Whitby's for little Mary at any time, or a large bonnet at Jebb's', said Mr Parker; 'as for the boys, I must say I would rather **them** run about in the sunshine than not.' 'Yes, indeed', replied his wife, 'I will get Mary a little parasol, which will make her as proud as can be. How grave she will walk about with it, and fancy herself quite a little woman.'

In common with some other accessories to female dress at this time, parasols could be purchased from the circulating library which dealt in several commodities besides books (Lydia Bennet saw 'such beautiful ornaments as made her quite wild' in the library at Brighton) and it is pleasant to think that one of the objects of Charlotte Heywood's visit to Sanditon was 'to buy new parasols, new gloves, and new brooches, for her sister and herself at the library'.

Penelope Byrde

Address given at the Annual General Meeting
by Miss Elizabeth Jenkins
Some Notes on Background

I hope this audience will forgive me for the somewhat rambling nature of my remarks, but, disconnected as they appear to be, they all bear on the life or work or ambiance of the charming creature and formidably great creative artist, whom we are here to think about and to celebrate.

It has been said that the Regency was a water-shed between the old world and the new; "England had passed from a granary and a sheep-fold, to be the work-shop of the world." The Industrial Revolution was making an impact on people's daily lives rather earlier than we sometimes remember. Gas had been used experimentally as early as the 1790s; by 1813, Westminster Bridge was illumined by gas lamps. One is impressed now by the reflection in the dark water of the lamps and the myriad surrounding lights as one walks over the bridge at night. It is easy to imagine what the spectacle meant to people who saw it for the first time. Their charter was issued to the Gaslight and Coke Company in 1812. Ackermann, whose magnificent Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashion and Politics, was published monthly from 1809 to 1828, brought out in 1813 A Practical Treatise on Gaslight, with exquisite designs for gas-globes and brackets. Is it possible that this metropolitan brilliance, compared with the mild and beautiful candle-light still used in the country, may have played its part in forming the contrast between London and the country, which Jane Austen seems to equate with the contrast between dazzling and heartless sophistication and a serious and feeling attitude to life?

Some of the improvements of the age had made their way, we are to suppose, into Gloucestershire by 1803. The Royal Institution, still today in its original premises in Albemarle Street, was founded by Count Rumford, under the patronage of the Prince Regent in 1799, "for the promotion, diffusion and extension of useful knowledge," all with a view to improving the living conditions of daily life. Rumford, whose title had been bestowed on him by the Elector of Bavaria for his improvements to smoking chimneys, was an authority on fireplace construction and had invented a slow-burning porcelain stove. Seeing that his contrivance was not marketed before 1799, and that, as Jane Austen said herself, Northanger Abbey was finished in 1803, it showed considerable topical awareness on her part, to say that when Catherine Morland saw the drawing room at Northanger, she was disappointed because "the fireplace where she had expected the ample width and ponderous carving of former times, was contracted to a Rumford, with slabs of plain though handsome marble

and ornaments over it of the prettiest English china", while General Tilney's improvements to the Abbey kitchen included "the stoves and hot closets of the present", one of them no doubt being Rumford's "closed roaster".

The theme of *Northanger Abbey* is a schoolgirl's passion for the Gothic Revival and her dawning realization that the agitations and alarms of real life are more engrossing and acute than those of fantastic and morbid fiction, and it is natural that the actual scene should be presented in clear, bright tones, to the exclusion of the gloom, the fitful moonlight, the decayed masonry of Mrs Radcliffe's school. When Henry Tilney gently scolds Catherine for her absurd, not to say most improper suspicion, that his father, General Tilney, had been responsible for the death of his wife, Henry says: "Does our education prepare us for such atrocities? ...could they be perpetrated without being known, in a country like this, where roads and newspapers lay every thing open?"

Henry Tilney's scaling down of the Gothic idea by putting it into the perspective of the present, is very effective, but this prevailing and long-lived craze was still highly potent. It had begun as a literary idiom and spread to architecture and decoration. Kenneth Clark has said in his classic work: *The Gothic Revival*, "Reaction was its chief impulse". Pope, the poetic genius who so wholly influenced the early and middle years of the XVIII century, had excelled in the turning of acute social observation and trenchant common sense into poetry, and it was natural, inevitable even that after the triumph of Pope's tight-strung brilliance, there should be a public ready for fashionable dismal maunderings:

Sole on this blasted heath, a place of tombs,
Waste, desolate, where Ruin dreary dwells,
Brooding on sightless skulls and crumbling bones
Ghastful he sits...

"Charmingly dreary!" exclaimed Gray, in raptures with Mr Mallet's poem, *The Excursion*.

So, too, one might say, it was only when people were living in XVIII-century safety and comfort that they could afford to take aesthetic pleasure in the ideas that had chilled previous centuries: twilight as the coming on of darkness, autumn as the precursor of winter. Dekker writing in 1606 had said: "Now comes darkness suddenly like a thief out of a hedge." In 1750, Gray could say: "Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight," in his lovely scene of twilight and moonlight and the notes of the owl.

The mental pleasure taken in descriptions of dim light and Gothic ruins, extended to the visual one of looking at genuine ruins or imitation ones, or castles preserved as far as possible in

their mediaeval form, or new houses built on a solid substructure of convenience and comfort but decorated with Gothic detail. Blaize Castle, to which the Thorpes tried to force Catherine Morland to accompany them, was in fact a sham castle, a folly, built by Thomas Farr in 1766. John Thorpe assured Catherine that it was the oldest castle in the kingdom.

In the Victorian era, the Gothic idiom of building was still vigorously alive, but it had so thickened and coarsened, become so heavy and dead, it is amazing to turn from Victorian municipal building, to look back at XVIII century and early XIX century Gothic and realize how delicate, how aerial, how enchanting that was. Happily the re-decoration of Windsor Castle for George IV by Wyatt was accomplished not too late to be still in this style, recalling in its graceful, sweeping lines the miraculous fan-vaulting of Henry VII's Chapel. Horace Walpole whose house, Strawberry Hill, was the earliest as well as the most famous example of the genre, had a perception of the airiness and grace of mediaeval Gothic which the Victorians entirely lost. Walpole said it was : Vast, yet light. Strawberry Hill, though in scholarly gothic idiom, gives the impression of a fairy tale. He did, perhaps, rather exaggerate the delicacy and elegance when he lined a recess, copied from a Gothic tomb, with gold net-work over looking glass, but he was giving rein to the element in mediaeval décor that he found most attractive. He abolished the gloom and the stained glass dimmed with cobwebs which was the effect heavily stressed by the novelists whose works followed his "Castle of Otranto", and the domestic use of lucid stained glass is one of the most charming features of Regency gothic. To come downstairs on a bright morning to be greeted by the light pouring through panes bordered by strips of crimson, green, amber and violet, makes one wonder if this effect was the inspiration of Shelley's lines written 1819 :

Life like a dome of many coloured glass
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.

In 1796 was commissioned what was surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of the Gothic revival. William Beckford demanded from Wyatt a house that should look like the ruins of a convent, of which only the chapel, parlour and dormitory cloister were left standing. His scheme became more substantial as the building went up, and by 1806, Fonthill Abbey in Wiltshire was apparently finished, with two great wings added and an octagon tower, 276 feet high. The engravings of the Abbey, with its air of height, of vastness, of madness, make one dizzy.

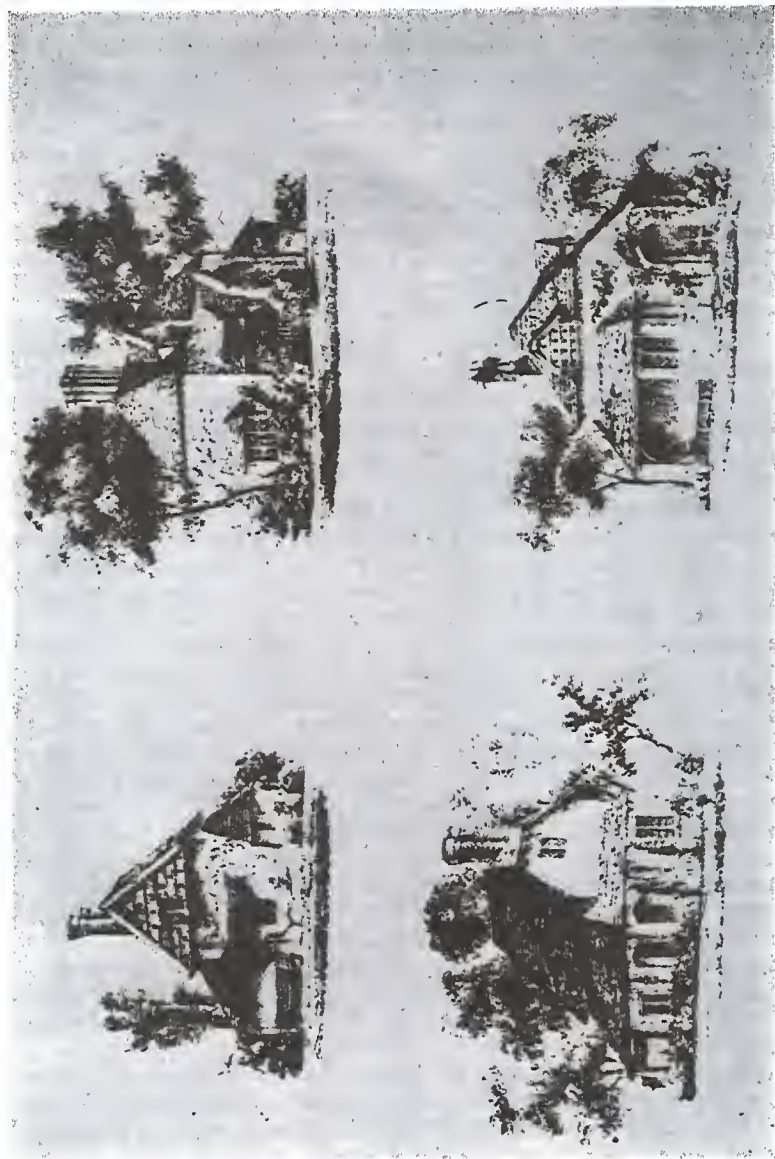
The millionaire Beckford's was folly on a gigantic scale, but something of the kind was available to small-holders. The book of designs produced by the architect Papworth in 1823, contained

one for "a dairy, designed in imitation of the ruins of a church". Ruins were built in gardens, either of stone or cement, or run up more cheaply in painted canvas. The demand for Gothic detail on houses of all sizes required an architect's portfolio of designs, collected from mediaeval masonry. Nash said: "I hate this Gothic style, one window cost more trouble than two houses ought to do." The window feature that could not have cost Nash much trouble was, either the pointed arch frame, of which General Tilney had the original thing at Northanger which was another disappointment to Catherine Morland: "to be sure, the pointed arch was preserved...but every pane was so large, so clean, so light! To an imagination which had hoped for the smallest divisions and the heaviest stone work, for painted glass, dirt and cobwebs, the difference was very distressing". Or else, the sash window in which arched glazing bars or curved window frames make a gothic arch in each of the upper panes. The living room of Chawton Cottage had originally a sash window, overlooking the road. When Mrs Austen, her daughters and Martha Lloyd went there in 1809, to give them greater privacy, Edward Knight blocked up that window and cut the one looking on to the garden. In the new window, in a modest and sensible gesture towards the prevailing mode, the upper panes have been given the form of a modified arch.

Nash was bemoaning the need for designs for mouldings and he engaged to help him the elder Pugin who searched out and copied an accumulation of heads, leaves, crosses and trefoils. The Prince Regent's chef was sent to study these, for making confectionery ornaments for the dinner table. One of his creations was a Gothic hermitage made in sugar and green almond biscuits. Pugin himself thought that the Gothicizing of furniture with pinnacles and crockets and sharp-pointed carvings, went too far. He said: "A man who remains any length of time in a modern Gothic room and escapes without being wounded by some of its minutiae, may consider himself extremely fortunate." The fashion carried to these extremes was for clients of high distinction; the less wealthy members of the upper class society had a development created specially for them. This was the Cottage Ornée. Mr Lynn's, near Clapham, was described as "a homely yet elegant little cottage; a humble thatch covers its roof...the tables, chairs wainscot and sideboard resemble in miniature the ancient appearance of the best of our old castles." Papworth, who described it in his *Rural Residences* of 1818, says of The Cottage Ornée, "it is a new species of building...it is not the habitation of labourers but of the affluent...in this age of elegant refinement, a mere cottage would be incongruous with the nature of its occupancy." In *Sense and Sensibility*, published in 1811, Mrs Dashwood and her daughters are living in a genuine cottage, with "dark, narrow stairs and a kitchen that smokes", but Mr Robert Ferrars is

transported in imagination by the word "cottage" into the realms of affluence and elegant refinement; congratulating Elinor on the nature of her abode, he says: "Some people imagine that there can be no accommodations, no space, in a cottage; but this is all a mistake. I was last month at my friend Elliott's...Lady Elliott wished to give a dance, "But how can it be done?" said she. "My dear Ferrars, do tell me how it is to be managed? There is not room in this cottage that will hold ten couples and where can the supper be?" I immediately saw that there could be no difficulty in it, so I said, "My dear Lady Elliott, do not be uneasy. The dining parlour will admit eighteen couples with ease; card tables may be placed in the drawing room; the library may be open for tea and other refreshments, and let the supper be set out in the saloon." Lady Elliott was delighted with the thought...and the affair was arranged precisely after my plan. So that, in fact, you see, if people do but know how to set about it, every comfort may be as well enjoyed in a cottage as in the most spacious dwelling." Elinor agreed to it all, for she did not think he deserved the compliment of rational opposition."

Even in London, a large house had a garden, and in a Regency country house, the relation of the house to the garden was as serious a matter as the interior decoration. In the late XVIII century, the landscape gardener, "Capability" Brown, abolished the flower beds in the front of the house and by the use of the ha-ha, an invisible boundary in the form of a deep ditch, appeared to bring the park up to the windows. The Regency architects, by the use of the conservatory, appeared to bring it right into the house. Landscape was now expected to induce a mood, leading through variations of feeling inspired by the hill, the hanging wood, the cascade, the winding stream, and if these features were not present, they had to be contrived. Repton, the successor of Brown, published his *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening* in 1794, and his much greater work, *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, in 1816. Between these dates he had become such an acknowledged master that in *Mansfield Park*, published in 1814, Mr Rushworth considers engaging him to "landscape" Sotherton, though his terms are five guineas a day. Repton's scene demanded 3 features:—undulations, groups of trees and water. If these were not already there, then streams had to be diverted, avenues felled, trees transplanted, ground levels raised or hollowed out. In the heady excitement of taste, Mr Rushworth had already decided to sacrifice his ancestors' oak avenue. The Park might be given up to the professional planner, but there was a strong personal taste in the owners for shrubberies of evergreens and a marked desire to get into the shade. Mrs Tilney's favourite walk had been a damp, over-hung shrubbery path, the party at Sotherton were glad "to leave the unmitigated glare of day behind and to get into the wood which, though only



(Mansell Collection)

Cottages Ornées at Blaise Hamlet

of larch and laurel, was darkness and shade and natural beauty compared with the terrace and the bowling green". The discomforts of the weather in "Emma", were chiefly from heat; Frank Churchill and Mr Elton were both made extremely cross, one by a hot ride, the other by a hot walk, and Mrs Elton was at last tired to death of picking strawberries in the sun and had to go and sit in the shade. Were the XIX century summers hotter than ours? There is Scott's—to us—really extraordinary choice of the ideal place in which to compose. The rivers Tees and Greta met in Rokeby Park, dashing over beds of marble so fiercely they wet the branches with their spray. Halfway up an over-hanging cliff was a cave, its opening veiled by creeper, while a stream ran splashing down its back wall. Here his host, Mr Morritt, the owner of the Rokeby Venus had a chair and table brought for him, and here Scott sat, writing Rokeby.

The craze for picturesque beauty, with its emphasis on chiaroscuro, pale blasted trees, wild murky landscapes, the brown tints of autumn, which inspired Marianne Dashwood, was closely affiliated to the taste of the Gothic Revival. A quite separate passion which had seized upon the English, existed at the same time bringing with it the delicate, bright colours, the turquoise blue, the yellow and rose pink of the fashion for the East. The English merchants from the XVII century onwards, had imported continuously from China and India; from China, tea, wallpaper (the poor man's version of the Chinese silk wall-covering), parasols, porcelain, and the mandarin's palanquin which had become the Englishman's sedan-chair. From India they brought tea again, muslins, spices and furniture made of reed and bamboo. From 1808, however, the general public had their imagination arrested by the work of the uncle and nephew, Thomas and William Daniell, who published first an album of brilliantly executed colour prints called "Oriental Scenery", followed by: "Views in Egypt," "A Picturesque Voyage to China" and "A Picturesque Voyage to India." The Egyptian influence did not take widely, though we see it in winged sphinxes on clocks and looking glasses, and Nelson's victory on the Nile in 1798 introduced a fashion for the mameluke cap, with a crown like a fezz, swathed at the base by a full, puffed out rouleau; Jane Austen wore one at Lord Dorchester's ball in 1800; but the Chinese idiom was firmly established and had already been used by cabinet makers to create Chinese Chippendale. When the Prince Regent decorated the inside of Brighton Pavilion, a process begun in 1806, he did it in the Chinese taste, but he created the exterior in the Indian mode, with slender minarets and clustering, onion-shaped domes. In 1817, Tom Moore published his sensationally successful collection of Indian tales in verse, which he called "Lallah Rookh." He had never seen the Indian palaces of Kashmir, but all he needed to see was Brighton Pavilion. The mania for Eastern effects of

which Brighton Pavilion is the supreme example, ran riot for decades. In the 4th series of "Our Village", Miss Mitford described what a trendy little couple had done with their house: "Every room is in masquerade; the saloon Chinese, full of fancy mandarins and pagodas, the library Egyptian, all covered with hieroglyphics, the furniture swarming with crocodiles and sphinxes. They sleep in Turkish tents and dine in a Gothic chapel."

The Austen family had an immediate connection with the East. The Rev. George Austen's sister Philadelphia had married Mr Hancock, a surgeon in the East India Company who was known to Warren Hastings, and the latter stood godfather to their daughter Betsy, the Austens' glamorous cousin who first married the Comte de Feuillide, and after his death on the guillotine in the French Revolution, became the wife of Henry Austen. The background of India was a part of the Austens' family consciousness. In the fragment, "Catherine", written by Jane Austen when she was 17, this conversation occurs between the serious Catherine and her flighty cousin, about the shipping out of girls to India to get them married off: "Do you call it lucky, for a girl of genius and feeling to be sent in quest of a husband to Bengal, to be married there to a man of whose disposition she has no opportunity of judging till her judgement is of no use to her, who may be a tyrant or a fool or both, for what she knows to the contrary. Do you call that fortunate?"

"I know nothing of all that; I only know that it was extremely good in Sir George to fit her out and pay her passage, and that she would not have found many who would have done the same."

"I wish she had not found one," said Kitty with great eagerness, "then she might have remained in England and been happy."

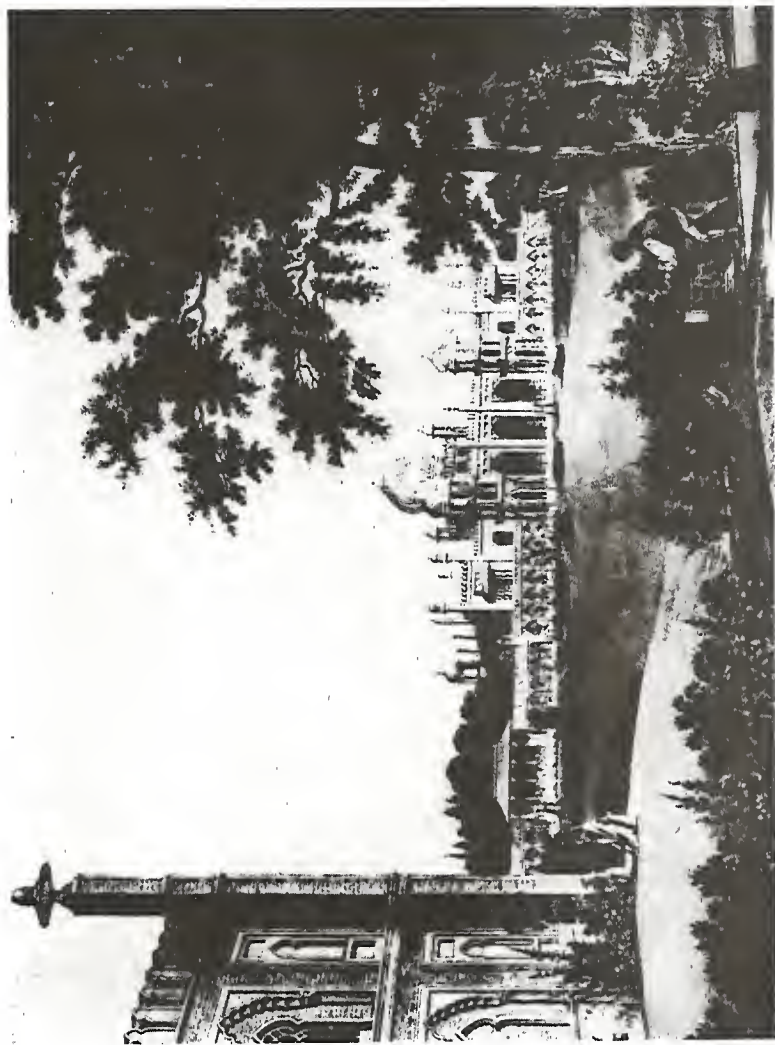
"Well, I cannot conceive the hardship of going out, in a very agreeable manner with two or three sweet girls for companions, having a delightful voyage to Bengal, or Barbados, or wherever it is, and being married soon after one's arrival to a very charming man, immensely rich—I see no hardship in all that."

"But supposing all this to be true—to a girl of any delicacy the voyage in itself, since the object of it is so universally known, is a punishment that needs no other to make it very severe."

"I do not see that at all. She is not the first girl who has gone to the East Indies for a husband, and I declare, I should think it very good fun, if I were poor."

"I believe you would think very differently then."

The adult novelist also reflected the English interest in the East. In *Mansfield Park* when Edmund has sought out Fanny and excused himself for consenting to act in *Lovers' Vows*, he looks



(BBC Hulton Picture Library)

Repton's unexecuted design for the west front of the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, from his *Designs for the Pavilion at Brighton*, 1808. Cf. Clifford Morgan, *Royal Pavilion*, 1951, pl. 18 (1959 edn, pl. 15).

over her table of books. "You meanwhile will be taking a trip into China, I suppose. How does Lord McCartney go on?" Lord McCartney had been Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Peking. His "Journal of the Embassy to China" had been published as part of Barrow's memoir of him in 1807. Only one person in Mansfield Park, apart from Fanny, would have read Barrow's memoir, Sir Thomas Bertram, from whose library she must have been allowed to borrow it. Before leaving the East Room, may we linger over the three transparencies, pasted on three lower panes of one window, "during a rage for transparencies". The Oxford English Dictionary says that the word transparency, used for a picture to be seen against the light, dates from 1807. The next few years would coincide with the childhood of the Bertram sisters. Here, "Tintern Abbey held a place between a cave in Italy and a moonlight lake in Cumberland." How much one would like to have that one! though it can have been only a popularized version of the romantic idea of moonlight. But two women, altogether unlike each other, but both greatly gifted with observation, have given a true idea of moonlight. In June 1800, Dorothy Wordsworth, in Westmorland, had gone over from Grasmere to Ambleside and come home in the evening by the shore of Rydal Water. A neighbour had walked part of the way with her, and she wrote in her journal, "This was very kind but God be thanked, I want not society beside a moonlight lake." And Jane Austen's description of it in Mansfield Park, is surely one of the most beautiful ever made—"where all that was solemn and soothing and lovely appeared in the brilliancy of an unclouded night and the contrast of the deep shade of the woods".

The pleasures of country living are expressed in every one of Jane Austen's novels, particularly that of fresh air. Catherine Morland says she needs no incentive to get her out of doors, "the pleasure of walking and breathing fresh air is enough for me". The point is never dwelt on, but in the first two decades of the XIX century, though plumbing systems were being developed, the sanitary arrangements in humble houses were still primitive. Fanny Price, exiled to her home in Portsmouth, feels how wretched it is, to be "in the midst of closeness and noise, to have confinement, bad air, bad smells, substituted for liberty, freshness, fragrance and verdure". Sir Walter Elliot sarcastically upbraids Anne for going to call on an old school friend in very much reduced circumstances. "Everything that revolts other people, low company, paltry rooms, foul air, disgusting associations, are inviting to you!" And Emma, in intense misery at the ruin she believes she has created, is a little comforted by walking in the garden after a summer tempest. "Never had the exquisite sight, smell, sensation of nature, tranquil, warm and brilliant after a storm, been more attractive to her."

Country pleasures, the pleasures of a family house in the

country, meant more, it seems, to Jane Austen than any other kind, but of course she did thoroughly enjoy the pleasures of London. The theatre which she visited when staying with Henry, also a keen theatregoer, was, of these, the most exciting. Her fondness for theatricals dated from her childhood at Steventon, when the Austen family had acted *The Rivals* in their dining room, and other plays in a big barn across the road from the Rectory. The writing in *Mansfield Park* about the abortive production of *Lovers' Vows* covers the whole field of amateur theatricals from the couple who use rehearsals as opportunities for carrying on, to the trials of a producer who cannot control the company: "Nobody would attend as they ought, nobody would remember which side they were to come in." The supreme experience of the London playgoer in 1811 was to see Mrs Siddons. In April of this year Jane was staying with Henry and her sister-in-law in Sloane Street. Henry tried to get tickets for the party to see Mrs Siddons' *Constance* in *King John*. He was told by the box-keeper that he did not think Mrs Siddons was going to play. So Henry did not book. Later it turned out that she had played after all. Jane wrote to Cassandra: "I should particularly have liked to see her in *Constance* and could swear at her with little effort for disappointing me."

But what was it like, really to see Mrs Siddons? All great actors and actresses have the power to make the audience feel what they themselves are supposed to be feeling, but Garrick and Mrs Siddons seem to have possessed it to an overpowering extent. The story Mrs Siddons herself liked to tell was of her playing in *Jane Shore*. She had to come on, destitute and starving, and exclaim: "I haven't tasted bread for three days!" Once, when she had uttered this with all her powers, a little girl leant out of one of the boxes and called out in acute distress: "Oh, pray ma'am, **do** take my orange!" But *Jane Shore*, though a useful theatrical stand-by, was written, after all, only by Mr Rowe. The staggering results were achieved by the combination of Mrs Siddons and Shakespeare. I suggest that we can gain some idea of what she gave out, by one of her own accounts of what she took in. She said that when she was just married to Mr Siddons, one night after he had gone upstairs to bed, she sat up reading *Macbeth* for the first time. When she had read the scene of Duncan's murder, she was so frightened she could not stay by herself any longer, and started to go upstairs, but she was wearing a full, stiff silk dress that rustled as she went. In the taut state of her nerves, this whispering put her beside herself. She rushed into the bedroom where her husband was fast asleep, and threw herself down on the bed as she was, too terrified to put out the candle. So, in that state of imagination, there she lay, in the dark hours of the night, and the light of a solitary candle, beside the sleeping man. Some years later, the packed audiences who were

there to see her in *Lady Macbeth*, got the benefit of that. In 1814 Jane Austen wrote to her niece Anna Lefroy after Henry had taken the family to see Miss O'Neale in *Isabella*, Garrick's version of *The Fatal Marriage*. Jane Austen said: "She is an elegant creature and hugs Mr Young delightfully," but she added: "I fancy I want something more than can be. Acting seldom satisfies me." This seems to put it beyond question that she never did see Mrs Siddons.

We probably ought not to be surprised that the only English monarchs who were outstandingly gifted with aesthetic taste: Henry III, Richard II, Charles I and George IV, were notorious failures as kings; but credit should be given where credit is due, and the deficiencies of George, whether as Prince Regent or King, have sometimes obscured in people's view the extra-ordinary and inspired nature of his work as a patron of the arts: of music, painting, architecture, interior decoration and literature. George III had given him Carlton House as a London residence, and the Prince had employed the genius of Henry Holland to decorate it. The Rose Satin Drawing Room, the Blue Velvet Drawing Room, the Silver Dining Room, the Gold Drawing Room, and the Circular Drawing Room, Holland's chef d'oeuvre, decorated in lavender, silver and sky blue, with four fireplaces of violet marble, can, most of them, be seen in the superb coloured illustrations of Pyne's *History of the Royal Residences*. All the apartments had their windows gracefully draped and festooned and as many of the rooms were round or oval, the window drapings surrounded the great central chandelier. Lady Sarah Spencer, shown over the apartments in 1810, said that one of the chandeliers looked like a shower of diamonds. Holland's treatment of the chandelier was to hang it from a ceiling painted to look like a blue sky marbled with white clouds, so that it seemed to be a glittering fountain shooting up into the air.

The man for whom these brilliant scenes were created, the First Gentleman in Europe, greatly admired the novels of Jane Austen; these, so far, were "*Sense and Sensibility*", "*Pride and Prejudice*" and "*Mansfield Park*". In November 1815 while "*Emma*" was in the press, she was in London nursing Henry, now a widower. His doctor, Mr. Haden, was a friend of the Carlton House librarian, the Rev. Mr J. Stanier Clark, and knew from what the librarian had told him, that the Prince Regent kept a set of her novels in every one of his residences, and that he read them often. This comes from a source of sterling reliability, the *Memoir of Jane Austen* by her nephew Edward, who had changed his name to Austen-Leigh. When word came through Mr Haden that the lady who had written "*Pride and Prejudice*" was in London, the Prince Regent instructed his librarian to offer to show her the library and other apartments of Carlton House and to tell her that if she wished to do the Prince that honour, she was at

liberty to dedicate her forthcoming novel to him. One of the first sets of "Emma" off the press was specially bound by Murray in a vermillion and gold binding and sent to the Prince. This society was temporarily lent these volumes from the library of Windsor Castle, and with them, for display, the deeply-cut die of the three feathers used for stamping the spines of the Prince of Wales' books.

One sometimes feels that few, if any, of the great writers, have had as many unfounded criticisms levelled at them by people who cannot read what is in front of them, as have fallen to Jane Austen's lot: that she had no feeling for nature, that she lived the confined existence of a village spinster, that she did not like children; the favourite one, is that her mind was so closed to any but the narrowest interests, that she never mentions the Napoleonic war. In close touch with two dearly loved brothers who were naval officers on active service, one would expect, as is indeed the case, that her last novel, "Persuasion" and (as Mr Brian Southam has pointed out) very carefully dated in its opening—"this present time, the summer of 1814", with its hero a naval Captain, would bear strong signs of the emotional pressure caused by a long war sternly waged though in theatres distant from home and brought to a triumphant conclusion only two years before her own death. As to how deeply she felt what was a national issue, I would like to put side by side a letter from real life and a passage from her fiction.

The letter is one of those which, immensely interesting in itself, is put into the sharpest possible focus by the address and date at the head of it:

Victory, Oct. 19, 1805, noon, Cadiz.

"My dearest, beloved Emma, the dear friend of my bosom, the signal has been made that the enemy's combined fleet are coming out of port. We have very little wind, so that I have no hopes of seeing them before tomorrow. May the God of Battles crown my endeavours with success, at all events I will take care that my name shall ever be most dear to you and Horatia, both of whom I love as much as my own life, and as my last writing before the battle will be to you, so I hope in God that I shall live to finish my letter after the battle. Heaven bless you, your Nelson and Brontë." Underneath is written: "This letter was found open on his desk and brought to Lady Hamilton by Captain Hardy. Oh, miserable, wretched Emma, oh glorious and happy Nelson."

Is there not a kind of underwriting of this, in the final paragraph of "Persuasion"?

"Anne was tenderness itself and she had the full worth of it in Captain Wentworth's affection. His profession was all that could ever make her friends wish that tenderness less: the dread

of a future war all that could dim her sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm for belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance."

This society has benefited immensely from criticism and scholarship, which deepen our appreciation of works of art; but there is a point beyond which criticism and scholarship cannot take us. We cannot explain genius, only recognize it. Lytton Strachey said: "The essence of all art is the accomplishment of the impossible. This cannot be done, we say, and it is done. What has happened? A magician has waved his wand." What happens when Jane Austen works her magic is the creation of characters so convincing that they almost walk into the room. I do not think I have ever, of late years, re-read any of the novels without noticing something I had never noticed before; the last time I read *Mansfield Park* I was, for the first time, profoundly and consciously impressed by the evocation of Dr Grant. With what astonishing weight of meaning, Jane Austen loads single words (who can forget the cold luncheon at Pemberley with "the beautiful pyramids of grapes, nectarines and peaches"?). The economy of her unforgettable descriptions is amazing. Some years ago, we had a delightful talk from Margaret Lane, which went to show that when Jane Austen conjured up a domestic interior, she did it not so much by economy of words, as without any words at all. One word, however, is of over-riding importance in fixing the portrait of Dr Grant, that subtle mixture of a man of the world, a selfish and greedy bon viveur who was also a useful clergyman. He killed himself at last with eating three great institutionary dinners in one week; but his sermons were very good. Fanny Price, an attentive and thoughtful listener, said they were. His manners were excellent. When she was sheltering from rain under a tree outside his garden, and had refused the invitation of a civil servant to come indoors, "Dr Grant himself came out with an umbrella". He was the only person who, before the debacle ever spoke out to Mrs. Norris. She declared that the apricot tree in the parsonage planted by her husband and herself, was a Moor Park. "It cost us—that is, it was a present from Sir Thomas, but I saw the bill, and I know it cost seven shillings and was charged as a Moor Park." "You were imposed on, ma'am", replied Dr Grant. "These potatoes have as much the flavour of a Moor Park apricot, as the fruit from that tree." He of course performed the marriage ceremony of Mr Rushworth and Maria Bertram. Dr Johnson said that the Anglican marriage service was too fine for some marriages; there should be a more commonplace form of words for some, such indeed as was the Rushworth-Bertram alliance; but this service "was impressively read by Dr Grant".

I would not maintain that *Mansfield Park* is the greatest of the

four great novels, but it is the one I read oftenest, so it is with particular pleasure that, owing to the research of Betty Askwith, I am able to produce something concerning it. In 1834, Lord George Hill, younger son of the 2nd Marquis of Downshire, married Cassandra Jane, Edward Knight's youngest daughter. She died eight years later, and five years after her death, he married her elder sister Louisa. In the then state of English law, Lord George could not, in this country, marry his deceased wife's sister. The couple were married abroad, came home quietly and lived without trouble. In the archives of Castle Howard are a collection of unpublished letters from Pamela Fitzgerald to Lord Carlyle. One of them dated March 26, 1856, says: "Only fancy the discovery we have made, dear Lord Carlyle! Lady George Hill is own niece to Jane Austen the authoress and she can tell us so much about her! She had large dark eyes and a brilliant complexion, and long, long black hair down to her knees. She was very absent indeed. She would sit silent awhile, then rub her hands, laugh to herself and run up to her room. The impression her books give one, is that she herself must have been so perfectly charming. I always fancied her Anne in *Persuasion* was autobiography of herself, except that the real Captain Wentworth had not been fortunate enough to marry her. Lady George says Miss Austen's sister Cassandra tried to persuade her to alter the end of *Mansfield Park* and let Mr. Crawford marry Fanny Price. She remembers their arguing the matter but Miss Austen stood firmly and would not allow the change."

Lady George was the Louisa who at nine years old had sent her Aunt Cassandra, in one of her Aunt Jane's letters, "her best love and one hundred thousand million kisses". She knew her aunts as well as a child of nine could know them, and loved them dearly; but did she not make a mistake, or at least exaggerate the length of Jane Austen's hair? At twenty-three Jane had said how convenient caps were. Apart from washing and brushing, her hair gave her no trouble, as the long hair was plaited up out of sight, and the short hair curled without papering. This is not compatible with hair down to the knees, and as to black hair, the lock of Jane Austen's hair on view, one of this society's most valuable possessions, is a bronze colour. On the other hand, the habit of laughing and suddenly jumping up and running away to write something down, is confirmed by an independent account of what Louisa's elder sister Marianne remembered from childhood. How charming to know that the gaiety and exhilaration which her work gives us, it gave to her! The most important point, of course, is the argument between herself and Cassandra about the conclusion of *Mansfield Park*. Cassandra Austen was, I have always thought, a shade severe. What a lesson to find that she had so much liberality and sympathy with the world that she would have liked Fanny to marry Henry Crawford. But can we

wonder that it was not allowed? If it had been, the extraordinary tension of the novel would have been abolished. The wonderful scene where Fanny finds that Sir Thomas has ordered a fire for her in the East Room: if she had been going to obey his wishes, that would have lost its significance, and the episode of the day at Sotherton, during which Maria Bertram climbs round the palings to get into the park under Henry Crawford's protection, while Fanny cries out: "You will hurt yourself on those spikes!", the episode of which Mrs Leavis has said: "I know nothing of the kind more remarkable in any English novel; if we met it in Kafka or Henry James, we should at once recognize its wonderfully sustained but never obtrusive symbolism"—this whole imposing structure would have gone for nothing. It is not a question of what ending people would prefer. Are we not sad at heart, that Monsieur Paul could not come back to marry Lucy Snow, that Lily Dale would not accept John Eames, that when, after the obsessive longing of a lifetime, Dobbin at last married Amelia, it was too late? When we are in the power of a great novelist, we hear, not necessarily what we would have liked to happen, but what did happen.

We are here on enchanted ground. Sometimes, our very eagerness to realize that this is where Jane Austen actually was, almost prevents us from realizing anything; but sometimes, again, a sentence comes upon us with an effect of almost blood-chilling clairvoyance. Before Jane Austen and her family were settled in Chawton Cottage, she had written "Northanger Abbey" and sketched out "Sense and Sensibility" and "Pride and Prejudice"; but "Mansfield Park" "Emma" and "Persuasion" were all called up in that small house over the road. The structure of the novels is of a technical brilliance that is unsurpassed, but the miracle is the creation of life. In 1814 her niece Anna Lefroy was attempting to write a novel, which she sent by instalments to her Aunt Jane, for her aunt to sympathize over, to praise and criticize; and sitting in that very house, Jane Austen wrote to her about one of her characters, Mrs. F. "Remember, she is very prudent; you must not let her behave inconsistently!"

We say that Jane Austen is the least dated of all the great novelists, but we cannot but ask ourselves, could she have been what she was, if she had lived under our conditions: of the population explosion, the over-building, the mechanization, the terrifying mobility of the people who drive about over our landscape, and leave it desecrated behind them? We don't forget the counter-balance. In 1805, Lady Bessborough found, lying on the floor of a derelict cottage, a woman nearly dead, rotting away above ground. No one would help her because she had been a prostitute. Lady Bessborough knelt down by her and fanned away the flies with her handkerchief. In this country, at least, thank God, a sight like that would now be impossible. But

when we see the meadow beside Esthwaite Lake, sprinkled with bright yellow Kodak film cases which could just as easily have been carried away, and the edge of Coniston Water thick with sodden newspapers, cartons, and bottles, we are faced with one of the spiritual challenges of our time. I only recently discovered that in 1833, Wordsworth had dealt with this matter, telling himself, and us, how we ought to face the spoliation of the Lake District in his sonnet, "Steamboats, Viaducts and Railways". Compared with our experience, he had, as we say, seen nothing, but he had seen it coming, and he said :

Motions and means, on land and sea at war
With old, poetic feelings, not for this,
Shall ye, by poets even, be judged amiss—
Nor shall your presence, howso'e'er it mar
The loveliness of nature, prove a bar
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense
Of future change, that point of vision whence
May be discovered, what in soul ye are.

Well : one must try to learn from the great poet who, on this of all moral issues, had so much right to speak. But even at moments when one is driven to feel, to confess with shame, that all one asks of a great number of one's fellow humans is that they shouldn't be there, one admits that this would never have been Jane Austen's attitude. Not only do the novels show that they are the work of a vital participant in the human scene ; not only do her letters reveal that no human contact, with man, woman or child, failed to call out a vivid response ; but she put into actual words, her spontaneous, inexhaustible delight in the human race. In a letter of 1811, she told Cassandra that she had quite enjoyed two picture exhibitions, "though my preference for men and women always inclines me to attend more to the company than the sight."

The last living person, I think, who had known someone who had heard people speak of having seen Jane Austen, was Mrs Luff of Alton, who was over 80 in 1942. She had been told by her grandmother that the latter, as a little girl, had heard the grown-ups speak of seeing Jane Austen. Their cottage stood, still stands, at the side of the road, overlooking the field that stretches from the bottom of the garden of Chawton Cottage, to the house, part of which is still standing, known as Prowtings, and they used to see Jane Austen running across the field to call on her friends, the three Misses Prowting. The vision of this light-footed being, with the energy that is inseparable from genius, was preserved for us by Dorothy Darnell, the founder of this society, who searched out Mrs Luff ; but may we not feel that it is also evoked for us by one of Blake's sayings : "Everything that lives is holy ; Life delights in Life."

Elizabeth Jenkins

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1981



Fanny Price, Maria Bertram and Henry Crawford
at the gate in Sotherton Park.

Wood engraving by Joan Hassall, frontispiece to the edition of
Mansfield Park first published by the Folio Society for its members
in 1959.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £3,
and a single payment of £25 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1981

Membership

There were 86 new members during the year, of whom 17 became Life Members, as did 9 old members.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £3 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in Sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 25th July. In the absence of the President, Sir Hugh Smiley, Chairman, presided. Nearly 600 members and their guests were present.

Opening the meeting the Chairman said what a pleasure the appointment of Miss Elizabeth Jenkins as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire had given members of the Society. She had served on the Committee of the Society since its foundation. He welcomed Mrs Mason Hurley and Mr Jack Gray, of the Jane Austen Society of North America, to the meeting.

The Chairman asked that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting be taken as read, and presented the Annual Report for 1980, which was seconded by Miss J. Villiers, and carried.

Mr T. E. Baileff, the newly appointed Hon. Treasurer, presented the accounts. This was seconded by Mr S. Gill, and carried.

Mr Jack Grey proposed and Mr K. B. Walsh seconded the re-election of Lord David Cecil as President, Mr John Gore as Vice-President and Sir Hugh Smiley as Chairman of the Society. This was carried.

The Chairman proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by Professor Laurence Lerner of Sussex University.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs Rupert Shervington, seconded by Mr David Hopkinson, and carried.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Knight for once more lending Chawton House.

Annual General Meeting 1982

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 17th July. The address will be given by Professor Christopher Ricks, of Christ's College, Cambridge.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, 3 West Heath Drive, NW11 7QG.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of *Jane Austen in Bath*, by Jean Freeman, can no longer be obtained from The Selborne Bookshop. They are available from the Hon. Secretary.

Price: 50p (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-75

The second volume of *Collected Reports* is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £7.50, post free.

A Donation to the Society

Mrs Michael Smiley has made a most generous donation of £1,000 to the funds of the Society. Through her mother, the Hon. Mrs Clive Pearson, daughter of the 1st Lord Brabourne, Mrs Smiley is a great-granddaughter of Jane Austen's niece, Fanny Knight, who became Lady Knatchbull.

Ruth Mumford Robbins

The Committee of the Jane Austen Society, on which she had served since 1943, has had a very sad loss in the death of Ruth Robbins. Apart from being a kind and charming friend, she made two contributions to the Committee's work for the Society. She gave us the benefit of American scholarship, which to know is to respect. Any point which needed elucidation Ruth Robbins, by patient research, would resolve. I have always felt grateful to her for the information she produced about Dr Fordyce, whose book: *Sermons to Young Women*, published in 1765, was being read aloud by Mr Collins to the Bennet family, until put a stop to by Lydia's merciless interruption. Her other contribution was her quenchless, unflinching love for Jane Austen and everything concerning her. This interest inspired her to efforts of which few people would have been capable. She hardly ever missed an Annual General Meeting, very seldom a Committee

Meeting, though of late years moving with painful difficulty and gasping for breath. Her gallantry and her warm-heartedness are unforgettable.

Elizabeth Jenkins

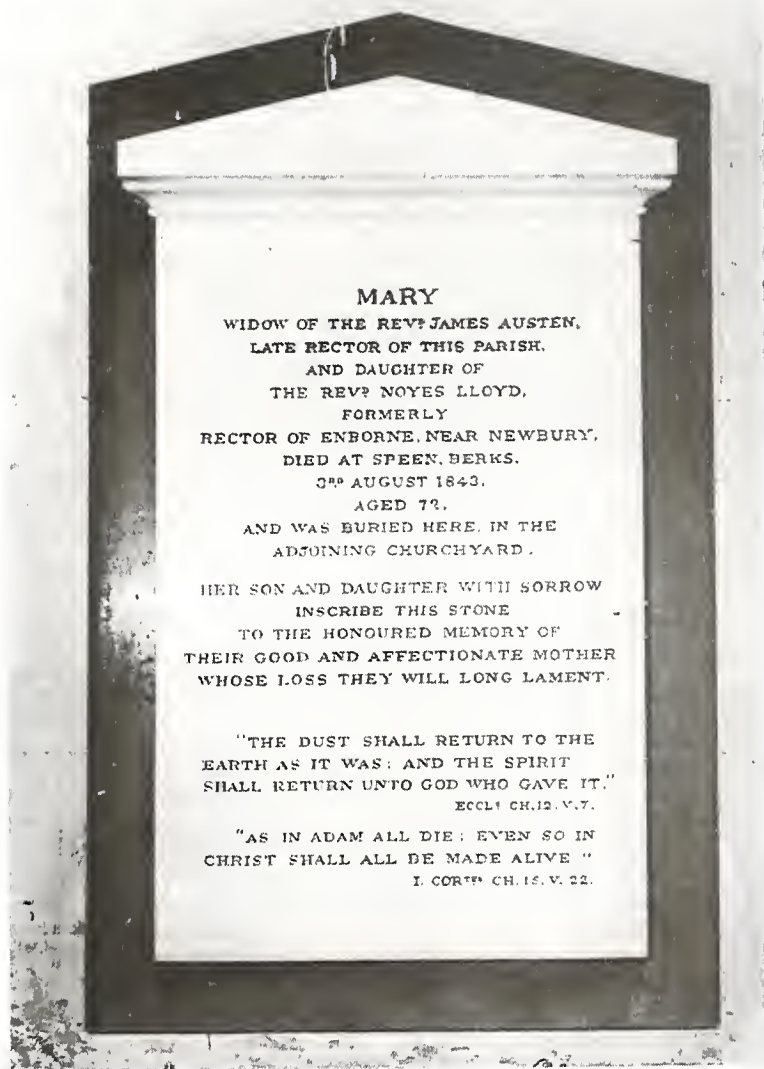
Five Letters from Jane Austen

Dr R. W. Chapman's standard edition of Jane Austen's letters (Oxford University Press, second edition, last reprinted 1979) comprises only 154 letters, and for some of these, where the original manuscripts were not to be found, he was obliged to use either previously-printed texts or copies made by members of the family. This is true of Letters 75-79 inclusive in the Chapman edition (all written to Cassandra early in 1813: 24 January, 29 January, 4 February, 9 February and 20 May), where Dr. Chapman's texts come from copies made by R.A. Austen-Leigh in 1909. But the originals of these letters came up for sale at Sotheby's on 3 May 1948. Lots 257-261 inclusive, when they were acquired by the late T. Edward Carpenter; they now belong to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust. By permission of the Trust, a limited edition (60 copies only), giving the original text of these five letters for the first time, has been produced by Dr F.P. Lock of the Department of English, University of Queensland, and his wife Margaret, hand-printed at their private press, with an explanatory introduction by David Gilson; Dr Lock has presented a copy of this handsomely-produced book to Jane Austen's House.

Mary Austen's Wall Memorial Rediscovered

In July 1977, when I was copying the epitaphs and wall monument inscriptions in Steventon Church, I happened to look behind the organ case, at which time I noticed something projecting from the wall. No member of the congregation with whom I talked seemed to know what the organ case concealed, and as it was not possible to move it at that time, the mystery was not solved until over a year later. At that time the organ was reconditioned, and when the case was moved it revealed the long-hidden white marble wall memorial to Mary Austen (1771-1843), the second wife of the Reverend James Austen (1765-1819), Jane Austen's eldest brother, and the mother of the Rev. James Edward Austen-Leigh (1798-1874), whose *Memoir of Jane Austen* was published in 1870, and Caroline Mary Craven Austen (1805-1880), the author of *My Aunt Jane Austen* (1952), both of which contain invaluable first-hand information concerning their celebrated aunt.

Mary Austen, who was Mary Lloyd before her marriage to the Rev. James Austen at Hurstbourne Tarrant, Hants, on 17 January 1797, was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Noyes Lloyd and Martha (Craven) Lloyd. Her other sisters were Martha Lloyd (1766-1843), who became the second wife of Jane Austen's brother, Sir Francis Austen; and Eliza Lloyd (1768-1839), who married the Rev.



Memorial Tablet in Steventon Church
to Mary, wife of the Rev. James Austen.

Fulwar Craven Fowle (1764–1840), Vicar of Kintbury, Berks, whom George III characterized as the best preacher, rider to hounds and cavalry officer in Berkshire.

A highly interesting account of Mary Austen's death and burial appears on pages 127–134 of the privately printed *James Edward Austen-Leigh* (1911) by his daughter, Mary Augusta Austen-Leigh. Unlike Anne Mathew (1759–1795), the Rev. James Austen's first wife, whose body was buried beneath the chancel of Steventon Church, where a neo-classical memorial was erected to her on the south chancel wall, Mary Austen was buried beside her husband in Steventon churchyard, where, according to her son, the Rev. James Edward Austen-Leigh, "a vacant brick grave at the side of my father had been waiting nearly 24 years for its tenant."

George Holbert Tucker

Notes on Auction Sales 1980–81

- A. *Manuscripts*. Lot 321 in a sale held by Lawrence of Crewkerne on 12 February 1981 was the typescript of a translation of *Pride and Prejudice* into Basic English, by an associate of C.K. Ogden, heavily corrected and amended in manuscript; it was unsold (but was later acquired by the compiler of these notes).
- B. *First and early editions*. The sale at Christie's, New York, on 6 February 1981 of the collection of Marjorie Wiggin Prescott and Albert Wiggin included, Lot 6, a copy of the first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811 in original pink paper boards uncut, with spines repaired but retaining the original printed paper spine labels, in a brown morocco gilt folding box by Sangorski and Sutcliffe; this sold for the high price of \$13,000.

Lot 56 in Sotheby's sale of 8/9 December 1980 was catalogued as a first edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1813, with the half-titles, bound in nineteenth-century polished calf gilt, with bookplate of John Croft Deverell; this was sold for £820, but examination after the sale showed it to be in fact a copy of the second edition with its titlepages removed and replaced by skilful facsimiles of the first edition titlepages – it was therefore returned to its vendor and payment refunded. A third edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1817 appeared as Lot 377 at Sotheby's on 5 May 1981 (contemporary half calf with the half-titles, but also with some defects) and sold for £65 (the dealer who bought it later catalogued it, however, at £120).

A first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814 in contemporary half russia, with some defects (and with no statement in the sale catalogue as to presence or absence of half-titles and advertisement leaf) was Lot 111 at Christie's on 4 February 1981 and sold for £280; another copy, lacking these leaves, in modern boards and with one text leaf misbound, was Lot 113 at Sotheby's on 28

May 1981 and was unsold. A second edition of *Mansfield Park* 1816, in nineteenth-century blue calf tooled in gilt and blind, but somewhat worn and lacking half-titles, was Lot 179 at Sotheby's on 9/10 April 1981 and sold for £45 (but was later offered by its dealer purchaser for £130).

Sotheby's sale of 28 May 1981 also included, as Lot 112, a first edition of *Emma* 1816, in later half calf rebacked, with no half-titles; this sold for £160. Another copy, in half roan gilt, *with* the half-titles, Lot 1 at Phillips on 2 July 1981, sold for the much higher price of £420.

I have noted the sale of three copies of the first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818. The earliest in date, Lot 112 at Christie's on 4 February 1981, was the same copy as that offered by the same auctioneer as Lot 61 on 26 March 1980 and reported in last year's Notes (contemporary half calf rebacked, with half-titles misbound before the general titlepages in Vols. 2-4); it was not in fact sold for £140 in 1980 as stated but was bought in at that price. In February 1981 this copy was sold for £260. The next copy was Lot 6 in the Prescott sale at Christie's, New York, on 6 February 1981; this copy, in original paper boards and printed paper spine labels, uncut, with some neat restorations, in quarter blue morocco slipcases, sold for \$2,200. Finally, a copy in modern half calf, lacking the half-title in Vol. 3, was Lot 95 at Phillips on 2 July 1981 and sold for £210.

David Gilson

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David Gilson

Mr David Gilson's *A bibliography of Jane Austen* is to be published by Oxford University Press in the 'Soho Bibliographies' series in the course of 1982, 877 pages, price £50, and may be obtained through any bookseller.

A Note on the Rev. James Austen

The 1969 Report of the Jane Austen Society contains a facsimile and transliteration of the Will of Jane's sister Cassandra. One word in it defeated the transliterator, for Cassandra was several times credited with mention of "the three per cent Ro . . ." I have been assured that the difficult word ought to be Reduced - "the three per cent Reduced." This was a Government Annuity issued originally at 4% per annum and reduced to 3% per annum in 1757. Further on the transliterator gave us "money secured on land in the Parish of Higham in the County of Leicester belonging to the vicarage of Gubbington in

Warwickshire . . .” This ought to be Cubbington, which is just north-east of Leamington Spa. I found that it had long been known there that James Austen, Jane’s eldest brother, was Vicar of Cubbington from 1792 until his death in 1819, but that he may never have visited the parish. James was presented to Cubbington by his kinswoman, the Hon. Mary Leigh of Stoneleigh Abbey, just nine days after his marriage to Anne Mathew and their settling at Deane parsonage. There are in existence at Lichfield two letters from James to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the first dated 27th July 1804, by which time James had married Mary Lloyd and was living at Steventon. In this he asks permission to be excused residence at Cubbington, stating that the living was of small value, that the vicarage house was incapable of containing his family and that he was licensed Curate of Steventon. Then on 29th January 1808, when James had of course succeeded his father as Rector of Steventon, he wrote thus, “I take this opportunity of signifying to your Lordship my Intention of residing as I have heretofore done upon my living of Steventon.”

Accordingly, the Cubbington registers reveal a succession of Curates at work, including one Thomas Warde from 1794 till 1820, when Cubbington went to James’s second cousin, George Leigh Cooke, who resided and carried out his duties in person throughout his incumbency. In a document of 1801 the Rev. Thomas Warde mentioned land belonging to the vicarage of Cubbington at Higham, which in 1733 had been purchased by the Governors of Queen Anne’s Bounty for the benefit of the living. Some years later he reported, “There is no Stipend or Tithe whatever paid to the incumbent of the vicarage of Cubbington nor no other income than what arises from the lands before mentioned.” One wonders how much of this income James Austen passed over to his faithful Curate. It would seem from Cassandra Austen’s Will that some of the land at Higham, or at any rate some of the rent thereon, had been alienated to Elizabeth Leigh at Adlestrop; for this, said Cassandra, “was given to me and my late sister by the late Mrs Elizabeth Leigh, and which said money produces an annual interest of six pounds eight shillings. . .” I recently examined the Will of Elizabeth Leigh, expecting to find mention of a legacy to the sisters. There was no such thing. So the gift must have been made during the lifetime of Elizabeth Leigh, who died in April 1816.

It was the mention of this curious gift in Cassandra’s will that sent me to Cubbington, and now necessitates an addition to my article on *Jane Austen’s Clerical Connections* (Jane Austen Society Annual Report for 1976). James concluded his career not only as Rector of Steventon and Vicar of Sherborne-St-John, but also as absentee Vicar of Cubbington in Warwickshire. A re-examination of the manuscript collection of writings of James Austen – now the property of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust – bears this out: for plain to see on the title-page is mention of “another Living, that of Cubbington in Warwickshire.” This same manuscript collection contains reference to yet another living – this time a living James rejected, in “Lines written at

Steventon in the autumn of 1814 after refusing to exchange that Living for Marsh Gibbon in the borders of Buckinghamshire and Oxford shire." He tells us in two-hundred-and-ninety lines of blank verse that he did not consider it his duty to accept the living, and of his feelings of relief.

William Jarvis

Mr Bennet and Mr Collins

There is a difficulty in *Pride and Prejudice*, recently discussed in Mr P.S.A. Rossdale's *What Caused the Quarrel Between Mr Collins and Mr. Bennet? Observations on the Entail of Longbourn*, in *Notes & Queries*, December 1980: since Mr. Bennet's estate is entailed "from the female line" and on a male heir, how comes the heir to be named Collins and not Bennet? If Jane Austen originally gave an explanation, with family trees and details of settlements, it disappeared when *Pride and Prejudice* was "lop't and crop't".

She wrote the first version, *First Impressions*, in 1796-7. However, when Mr Collins writes to propose "waiting on you and your family, Monday November 18th", the date is right for the year 1793, and I suggest that she did incorporate a few odd letters, written back in 1793-4, but worth re-using. Now, if she is putting into her novel an existing character named William Collins, he simply has to go on being called William Collins, that is his name, nothing can be done about it, the story must be adjusted to fit. His letters about Lydia and Mr Wickham and about Elizabeth and Mr Darcy both give the name of Bennet, so that, if they are early, Bennet was fixed as well, and Jane Austen was forced to have a complicated family history.

In the story, the reason that Mr Bennet's heir is not a Bennet could be that somebody has changed his name. For Mr. Rossdale, Mr Bennet was originally a Collins who, as a condition in the entail, on taking Longbourn took the name of Bennet that went with it; his cousin, Mr Collins senior, disapproved, and this accounts for "the disagreement subsisting between yourself and my late honoured father". Mr Rossdale, however, does not explain why our Mr Bennet was not a Bennet already, as would be the natural thing, if Longbourn was entailed in tail male and the late owner was a Bennet. The opposite change of name is really more plausible, with Mr Collins senior as a Bennet who took the name of Collins to secure an inheritance; that "illiterate and miserly" father had certainly left something worth having to our Mr Collins, whose "very sufficient income" could not come solely from the rectory of Hunsford. The likeliest change of name is to have taken his mother's, on becoming his uncle's or his grandfather's heir: it is hard to imagine our Mr Bennet disapproving, but one sees him making some wounding pleasantry, say about using one's mother's name as if one were illegitimate.

However, it is not necessary that Mr Bennet himself should have inherited Longbourn as heir male. There could be a new settlement of the estate with him and his heirs male named first in the entail,

followed by the Collinses. Our Mr Collins, be it noted, is not said to be Mr Bennet's heir male; he is the "distant relation" on whom the estate "was entailed, in default of heirs male", which is not the same thing. There is no need to postulate a change of name by anybody. We will have a gentleman, surname unknown, who has no male heir, but has had two sisters. Longbourn, being freehold at his disposal, he settles on the descendants of the elder sister, a Mrs Bennet, and thereafter, in default of heirs male, on those of the younger sister, a Mrs Collins. Our Mr Bennet, a great-nephew of the old gentleman, inherits; his second cousin, Mr Collins, however, has a strong impression about co-heiresses inheriting equally, as in certain cases they do, and has worked it out that he himself, as the eldest of his generation, is really the rightful heir. Nothing can disabuse him of the idea. This would fit in with his description as "illiterate"; he is as unteachable on the subject of settlements and entails as Mrs. Bennet herself.

Here, indeed, are the makings of a quarrel; and one understands, too, that our Mr Collins has "frequently wished to heal the breach". Since his father was unfortunately misinformed, it is not really "disrespectful to his memory" to abandon the quarrel; and he himself will inherit Longbourn anyhow. Meanwhile, Mrs Bennet may well resent "the cruelty of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters", when Mr Collins's claim depends on a female descent, from Mr Bennet's old great-aunt; he *ought* to be ashamed of having Longbourn.

Of course, this is all conjecture. I claim no more than that it is compatible with the clues that Jane Austen supplied, among them Lady Catherine's use to Elizabeth Bennet of the word "upstart". That Elizabeth is a gentleman's daughter she cannot deny; but if Mr Bennet is the first as well as the last of his name to own Longbourn, that makes the Bennet family really very inconsiderable.

Muriel Smith

Hancock family grave

In 1881 a record was made of the tombstone inscriptions surviving in the churchyard of St John-at-Hampstead, London. Using this it was possible recently to identify a ledger stone, very badly eroded but once engraved as follows:

In memory of Philadelphia wife of Tysoe Saul Hancock whose moral excellence united the practice of every Christian virtue she bore with pious resignation the severest trials of a tedious and painful malady and expired on the 26th February 1792 aged 61.

Also in memory of her grandson Hastings only child of Jean Capot Comt. de Feuillide and Elizabeth his wife born 25th June 1786 died 9th October 1801.

Also in memory of Elizabeth wife of H.T. Austen Esq. formerly widow of the Comt. Feuillide a woman of brilliant generous

and cultivated mind just disinterested and charitable she died after long and severe suffering on the 25th April 1813 aged 50 much regretted by the wise and good and deeply lamented by the poor.

Members of the Society will recognise the names of Jane's aunt, cousin/sister-in-law, and cousin's child.

Philadelphia, born 1730, was the elder sister of the Revd George Austen. She sailed to India in 1752 and married out there an elderly surgeon, Dr Tysoe Saul Hancock; their only child, Elizabeth, was born in 1761. The Hancocks returned to England in 1765, but Dr Hancock subsequently went back to India alone in 1768 and later died there. In his absence Philadelphia and her daughter travelled between London and France, where Eliza met and married her first husband, the Comte de Feuillide, who was guillotined during the Revolution. In 1791 the Hancocks settled again in London, but within a few months Philadelphia died of cancer of the breast. No reason can be found for her burial in Hampstead parish rather than in Marylebone where she was then living. However, in the eighteenth century Hampstead had the reputation of a health resort and had many resident doctors, so possibly Eliza took her mother there at the last minute for further treatment.

The widowed Eliza married her cousin, Henry Austen, Jane's fourth brother, in December 1797, and they lived at various smart addresses in London, where Jane visited them as her letters bear witness. The miserable little Hastings had been sickly and handicapped from his birth, and it was evidently a welcome release when he died in his teens. Eliza's own health was apparently not robust, and though the cause of her death is not specified, Jane describes her last illness as being "long and dreadful". Three weeks after her death, Henry was talking of taking Jane to visit the grave in Hampstead, but there is no further information in the family correspondence as to whether or not this happened.

For a fuller discussion of the lives of the Hancock family and their possible influence upon Jane's work, members of the Society are referred to the present writer's article "Jane Austen and her Hancock Relatives", which appeared in *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Volume XXX, No. 117 (1979), pp. 12/27.

Enquiries to local monumental masons proved, unfortunately, that it would be prohibitively expensive to have the original inscription recut in full. Your Committee therefore arranged for the stone to be smoothed over and the following abbreviated inscription engraved upon it:

Philadelphia Hancock / 26.2.1792 / aged 61
Her grandson / Hastings Capot de Feuillide / 25.6.1786-9.10.1801
His mother / Elizabeth Austen / 25.4.1813 / aged 50

Deirdre Le Faye

Where Was Rosings?

by

David Waldron Smithers

In the restless days between books I turn for ideas to a file of notes, a few of which I made some years ago. These notes refer to widely differing subjects that caught my fancy but failed to excite an immediate response. Just over two years ago, finding myself in this familiar predicament, I opened the file to read the words "Where was Rosings?" Jane Austen's topography, I remembered, was exact both Bath and Lyme providing good examples. Then there must surely have been a location well known to her for the setting of the house and grounds of Sotherton in *Mansfield Park* to help coordinate all those comings and going observed by Fanny as she sat alone on her seat. Jane Austen placed her characters with accuracy in selected surroundings where she might follow their movements with consistency and precision while they followed the design of her story. The suggestions previously made for a location for Rosings, usually Godmersham, were clearly wide of the mark. I decided to go and look for myself.

On her first visit to Kent Jane Austen had passed by the house where I was born on her way to Sevenoaks and I had good reason for believing that she must have known the Westerham-Sevenoaks valley well. My starting point was that first letter to Mr Bennet from his "well-wisher and friend" William Collins headed "Hunsford, near Westerham, Kent, 15th October", the village where he had been given the living that Easter. Hunsford and its great house of Rosings are described in Volume II, Chapter 5 of *Pride and Prejudice* when Elizabeth Bennet goes to stay at the parsonage with Charlotte and her husband Mr. Collins taken by Charlotte's father Sir William Lucas. They travelled from Longbourn in Hertfordshire nearly fifty miles in all but stopping off at Graecchurch Street to stay with the Gardiners, and from London changing horses at The Bell in Bromley. Leaving the high road some 24 miles from London they entered the lane to Hunsford. It struck me that every turn from the bottom of Star Hill, then called Morant's Court Hill, to Chevening, every location of parsonage, great house and park boundary fitted perfectly into the description of that journey. Chevening seemed likely to provide an answer to my question.

So I started on a literary quest unlike any research project I had ever been involved in, every step was rewarded with fresh evidence which fitted into my hypothesis with astonishing accuracy. Wary of relying on an assembly of observations in support of a pet theory as I was, the steady accumulation of evidence by one stroke of luck after another, in a light hearted literary pursuit could not I told myself, willingly and most unscientifically, fail to be set on a sure foundation.

First I visited Chevening and found an old man who had lived there all his life and had known my father. He walked me round a neglected overgrown garden of some size which had belonged to the parsonage, showed me where that house had stood, gave me the date of demolition



Engraved by J. May

CHEVENING PLACE.
THE SEAT OF LORD STANHOPE.
KENT.

Published 1830 by Geo. Wm. 25 Ivy Lane

and pointed out the two glebe fields behind so necessary to my theory. The parsonage had been located at the top of the lane opposite the gate to Chevening Park just as it should have been and across the road lay the lodges opening onto Chevening Lane, just as did those in front of which Mr Collins walked up and down while awaiting the arrival of Mr Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam.

My next call was to the Kent Archives Department in Maidstone to look at their Chevening file. There, as though waiting for me to find it, lay a plan of Chevening Church and Rectory, together with its garden, all walks and cross walks, made in 1842 and inscribed as presented by the Land Surveyor to the Rev. John Austen. Underneath an older plan appeared, which included two glebe fields, made for "S. Preston, Rector of Chevening, 1785". Further into the file I found a rough sketch plan of the parsonage itself with a veranda running down the road side of the front parlour so that from this room they "could distinguish nothing in the lane" and a back room which also fronted the lane but could have allowed Mr Collins knowledge of what carriages passed along. To complete the picture there was a small room looking back to the garden which ladies who wished to avoid the company and have their private gossip might well select.

Things seemed set on getting better and better, so I then searched for the origins of the Rev. John Austen. He turned out to be Jane's second cousin, the one who inherited the great Austen fortune (the fate of which some members of the family still wonder about today) of whom Jane wrote with a hint of envy: "Such ill-gotten wealth can never prosper", and whose son built Capel Manor. This Rev. John Austen born in 1777, two years younger than Jane, was the grandson of Old Francis Austen of the Red House, Sevenoaks, who Jane had visited with Cassandra and her parents in 1788. Old Francis who had "set out in life with £800 and a bundle of pens" was a most successful solicitor, agent to the Duke of Dorset and Clerk of the Peace for Kent, he married two heiresses and secured a third as godmother to his son, the Rev. John's father. Old Francis's second wife was Jane Lennard (née Chadwick) whose inheritance of Wickham Court he had helped her to secure. She had first married one of two illegitimate Lennard sons and a family dispute had arisen over the property. The Lennard family had owned Chevening for seven generations before selling it to the Stanhopes. Henry Austen (Jane's brother) referred to "the family living of Chevening" which may have come to Francis Austen from his wife or been acquired by him in one of his many local deals, however his son Francis Motley Austen owned property in Chevening in 1796 and bought the Kippington Estate near Sevenoaks which also included some Chevening land. One way or another the Austens seem to have acquired the gift of the living to which John Austen came in 1813.

Things had been going so well that I had hoped for evidence which would fix Jane herself on a visit to Chevening at the time of writing *First Impressions*. The evidence is good but circumstantial. Her descriptions fit perfectly down to the direction of the walks from the

parsonage taken by Elizabeth Bennet and the way the paths she trod passed through trees and along the boundary of the park. The gate where she met Mr Darcy with his letter is placed exactly where it is said to be. The one discrepancy I could find was that Rosings was situated half a mile across the park from the parsonage whereas Chevening House is just across the road, but this seemed to be a variation designed to allow Lady Catherine to condescend by sending the Collins home in her carriage after dinner.

Jane we know had been to Sevenoaks and to visit the Walters at Seal and had family connections with Chevening. She must have known it well if indeed she did describe it as accurately as it appears. Perhaps, like Elizabeth Bennet, she arrived one March and stayed five weeks, if so it was probably in 1796 on her way to Rowlings near Goodnestone to stay with brother Edward where she could so easily have adapted the name to Rosings to fit into her Hunsford village.

One other piece of good fortune was still to come my way, Mrs Rosemary Brewer who was then the Estate Clerk at Chevening, pointed out to me on one of my visits that the first Lord Stanhope's mother had been called Catherine and appears in the Chevening records as "dau. of Arnold Burghill" providing an almost ready-made name for the chatelaine of Rosings. There was also a possible model for Lady Catherine de Bourgh living at Chevening at the time. The 3rd Earl Stanhope was there in 1796 and his mother of Scottish descent was living at the Dower House, she was Grizel 2nd Countess Stanhope (née Hamilton) then aged 77. She lived to be 92 and was described by Aubrey Newman in *The Stanhopes of Chevening* as "a rather fierce old lady" who took after another great character her maternal grandmother Grizel Baillie. The 2nd Countess had brought up from childhood that beautiful, talented and extra-ordinary person Hester Stanhope when her mother, the 3rd Earl's first wife, died. Hester just a few months younger than Jane Austen was a distant relative on her mother's side, and it seems just possible that they may have met.

My search for Rosings had proved so interesting and revealed so many fascinating side lines that my original intention of writing a short article about it, as indeed I did for *Country Life* in October 1980, was to be expanded into a book "Jane Austen in Kent" which has now been published most appropriately by Hurtwood Publications at Westerham Press. "Where was Rosings?" has been answered, to my satisfaction at least, and if correct then Chevening Park is even better known around the world as the home of Lady Catherine de Bourgh than it is as that of 14 generations of the Lennard and Stanhope families.

Jane Austen: Illness and Infirmary

The presentation of illness in Jane Austen's novels underwent a narrowing, avoiding death, whilst making it into a barrier, placed in a character's way, who is then rewarded for passing through, by health and a socially acceptable marriage. Death is, however, an ever-present part of her letters, for instance the desperate attempts to save Charles Austen's daughter, Harriet, who had "water in her head." Life is in constant danger, as demonstrated by the fact that two of her brothers lost wives in childbirth.

But the fullest description of terminal illness in the letters, tragically, is that of Jane Austen herself. In 1964, Sir Zachary Cope sought to establish the cause of her death, relying on the letters for his diagnosis of Addison's Disease of the adrenal bodies. Interestingly, Addisonian crises, periods of gastric upset and low blood-pressure, can be stress-related. Therefore, emotional shocks, such as Henry Austen's bankruptcy, or the family's virtual exclusion from her uncle's will, could have brought on her physical symptoms.

If death in the novels is distanced, and as childbirth is subject to the restrictions of a polite sensibility, the normal cycle of birth-marriage-death is disrupted. We are left with a progression from health to marriage, with sickness as the intervening stage. It is an optimistic view of life. But it is also a moral one. For these illnesses allow a moral assessment of their victims.

Compared with this moralisation of illness, the first wish in the letters is for the avoidance of suffering. This difference of emphasis between literary and factual illness can be brought out by a comparison between Marianne Dashwood's second illness, at Cleveland, and Jane Austen's account of her father's death in 1805. The latter is confronted as a stark fact: "An illness of only eight and forty hours carried him off yesterday morning between ten and eleven." When it comes, the decline is rapid. Mr Austen drifts into insensibility, "almost in his sleep," a process his doctor is powerless to prevent.

In contrast, Marianne's illness is vigorous, a fevered struggle of mind and body. Her condition has an identifiable cause: "Two delightful walks where the grass was the longest and wettest." When she awakes from "so long and sweet a sleep," Marianne tells Elinor that her illness was "entirely brought on by myself. Had I died, it would have been self-destruction." Jane Austen has rationalised illness, until it has become a direct result of human actions, a "series of imprudence towards myself, and want of kindness to others," as Marianne puts it. But it is not a judgement she can make of her father, whose life had been "virtuous and happy."

However, the unfinished *Sanditon* seems to challenge this presentation of illness. It suggests a new social fragmentation, in which the continuity of inheritance of *Mansfield Park* has been replaced by Lady Denham's exploitation of her dependants, and illness as educative suffering, by illness as a kind of decadent self-satisfaction. In her original draft, Jane Austen wrote that the Parkers were "martyrs to every discomfort." Indeed, the citizens of Sanditon are so

much martyrs to their Shandean hobby-horses, that all organised society is breaking down. For all Diana Parker's determination to be "useful", she, like all the rest, is ruled by self-interest. And yet, in a sense, illness in *Sanditon* unites, because all its major characters are obsessed by sickness.

It was this potential for re-unification, implicit in the selfishness of sickness, that Miss Austen had presented in her earlier novels. For illness reinforces certain personal relationships, between Jane and Elizabeth Bennet, and creates new ones, between Louisa Musgrove and Benwick. But it is also more widely social. Enquiry after health is an important part of the social cement of Highbury, those events and experiences that touch the lives of all, and dominate the village's consciousness.

If illness provides a common medium of exchange, then it also provides Miss Austen with a revealing fictional image; revealing because it becomes a standard against which characters are judged. It is the image of the nurse. It may be a selfish role, as with Alicia in *Lady Susan*, forced to nurse her aging husband, when she would rather see him despatched to Bath. It may be an act of self-assertion, as it is for Mary Musgrove, who insists on remaining at Lyme, despite her earlier admission, that "I do not know that I am of any more use in the sick-room than Charles." But, to be called a nurse may also be a sign of selflessness. Elizabeth Bennet cares nothing for the criticisms of Mrs Hurst and Miss Bingley, that she "looked almost wild, her hair so untidy, so blousy." Her only concern is with reaching and comforting her sick sister.

However, Jane Austen was not interested in some composite ideal nurse. Her fictional world of a polite culture, was never the slave of her ironic eye. Anne Elliot believes that the nurse sees experience that enlarges the spirit. This illusion is immediately challenged by Mrs Smith, who has seen what it is to be the sick victim. "Here and there, human nature may be great in times of trial, but generally speaking it is its weakness and not its strength that appears in a sick-chamber."

In her letters, this search for the selfless nurse is centred on her sister, Cassandra, on the "tender, watchful, indefatigable nurse" of her last illness. But Jane also knew what it was to see people suffering, and to nurse them. When her brother Henry is ill in 1816, it is Jane who is his constant companion. She had also helped Cassandra through the pain of losing her fiancé. She lives with an invalid mother, two sickly brothers – Charles and Henry, and possibly also George, her mentally handicapped brother.

This meant that she was very conscious of medicine, and especially doctors, who were frequent visitors and eventually family friends and dinner-guests. As a girl, she knew John Lyford, the Basingstoke surgeon. It was a connection that continued, John's son being a friend of her brother, Edward. And when, in her last illness, she was removed to Winchester, it was to his nephew, Giles King Lyford, the local surgeon, that she went.

However, the medical men of the novels, including Perry, who was

possibly based on a Dr Parry who she came across in Bath, are all provincial. They are part of a world intellectually and culturally remote from the metropolis. The new medicine that she observed from leading figures such as Charles Haden, heard reported from Bath, or read about, had yet to reach the village life that she documents. It would seem out of place. For the removal of the problematical nature of illness in her work requires little of the doctor, except to visit and to pronounce his verdict. When the surgeon has examined Louisa Musgrove, we are told immediately that, "he was by no means hopeless; he spoke cheerfully." We see very little actual treatment going on.

To return, in closing, to Jane Austen herself, it should be noted that she suffered from two very specific, and possibly significant ailments earlier in her life. One was a temporary deafness in 1808. This was probably nothing more than impacted wax around the ear-drum. But it was potentially more serious, for, as Mary Lascelles points out, Miss Austen's "mastery of dialogue" comes from having a "fine and true ear." Similarly potentially disabling for the writer was eye trouble, that first appears in January 1799, when she writes: "I have had weakness in one of my eyes, which makes writing neither very pleasant nor very profitable." Although her condition seems to have improved by May of that year, a lingering weakness remained.

The significance of these ailments is that they cut the individual off from his surroundings, an abiding nightmare given expression in *Emma*. When the heroine's enlightenment comes, it is a realisation that, far from being at the centre of her society, watching and listening, she had been literally and metaphorically blind. She tells Knightley: "I seem to have been doomed to blindness."

Jane Austen once said that no one would like Emma but her. She was wrong of course. But there does seem to have been a special affinity between them. Emma may never be ill, but, in the end, she is brought, like her creator, to realise the tenuousness of health, when the thought of losing Knightley cannot just be willed away, as Harriet or Mrs Churchill could be willed away. She must grapple with the potential loneliness of the blind, that feeling of being set apart, as previously she had been set apart by never being ill. The difference is that, whilst Emma found her counterpart in Knightley, who is also never ill, and lost her fear of blindness, Jane Austen never did. Illness remained an ever-present, if, until *Sanditon*, a buried or rationalised threat.

Martin R. Long

Kissing

Address given at the Annual General Meeting
by Professor Laurence Lerner

Ever since I was honoured some months ago with the invitation to give this address, I have been wondering what on earth I could say to the Jane Austen society that they do not know already. I remember being told as a student of the woman who, when a new edition of a Jane Austen novel appeared, noticed if the punctuation has been changed. Surely this tent today must be full of such people, so well acquainted with the text of the novels that there are no details to which their attention can still be drawn.

This was my state when, a few weeks ago, I was exercising one of my other functions, that of poet, by taking part in an Arvon Foundation Course where the students were aspiring poets. One of them had written a poem that concluded with a mention of Jane Austen's heroines and 'their rare intense kisses.' I objected to this: surely, I said, no Jane Austen heroine ever *kisses* anyone? I repeated the question at dinner that night, and asked the table if they could think of any kissing in any of her love-scenes. None of us could, and I still can't, and I invite you, in the course of the next hour, to turn the matter over in your minds, and if you can think of any to tell me. But in the meantime, I realised that I had found my subject.

At this point I must insert the result of my inquiry. Two members of the society came up to me afterwards and reminded me of the contact between Edmund and Fanny in *Mansfield Park*, on the occasion of her visit to Portsmouth. I had in fact forgotten this, but on looking it up I do not find anything to change my assertion. There are two relevant moments: one is Fanny's departure for Portsmouth, when she distressed both by the uncertainty of what lies in store for her, and by her misery at Edmund's infatuation with Mary Crawford:

She clung to her aunt, because she would miss her; she kissed the hand of her uncle with struggling sobs, because she had displeased him; and as for Edmund, she could neither speak, nor look, nor think, when the last moment came with him; and it was not till it was over that she knew he was giving her the affectionate farewell of a brother.

The other is her return, when the family is shocked by the news of Maria's elopement, so that the pleasure of the reunion is clouded by the sorrow she shares with them. Here is the meeting with Edmund:

He was alone, and met her instantly; and she found herself pressed to his heart with only these words, just articulate, "My Fanny – my only sister – my only comfort now." She could say nothing, nor for some minutes could he say more.

Both speakers described the scene as one in which Fanny wonders whether Edmund's brotherly kiss contains any trace of a stronger than brotherly feeling. It is clear that this is not an altogether accurate description of what takes place, and I suspect that both of them may have run these two scenes together in memory. In the first Fanny is

certainly being kissed (I take it that is the meaning of 'affectionate farewell') and only realises this later, but there is no question of the kiss having more than a brotherly meaning to Edmund. In the second he *calls* her his sister, and with great intensity, but I fear it is only the intensity of his own distress at the family disgrace. In both scenes, the sexual attraction is on one side, the physical approach on the other: the heroine is kissed or embraced, but only because the hero is not (by then) in love with her. The person in love is not allowed to do the kissing.

So now I would like to look with you at Jane Austen's love scenes, and by doing so suggest a few conclusions about her handling of sexual passion. I begin with *Northanger Abbey*:

His first purpose was to explain himself; and before they reached Mr. Allen's grounds he had done it so well that Catherine did not think it could ever be repeated too often. She was assured of his affection; and that heart in return was solicited which, perhaps, they pretty equally knew was already entirely his own.

No touching, you notice. Not only is there no physical contact between these lovers, there is not even an admission that they have bodies.

There is a bit more substance to the declaration scene of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Elizabeth, feeling all the more than common awkwardness and anxiety for this situation, now forced herself to speak, and immediately, though not very fluently, gave him to understand that her sentiments had undergone so material a change since the period to which he alluded as to make her receive with gratitude and pleasure his present assurances. The happiness which this reply produced was such as he had probably never felt before; and he expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do. Had Elizabeth been able to encounter his eyes, she might have seen how well the expression of heartfelt delight, diffused over his face, became him; but though she could not look, she could listen; and he told her of feelings which, in proving of what importance she was to him, made his affection every moment more valuable.

Clearly this is an author who keeps her distance from her characters, especially if they are in the slightest danger of losing their dignity; this is evident in the cool irony of 'he expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do.' But at the same time, there is an awareness of the intensity of his feeling, an awareness that is in the end not unsympathetic. There is still no touching, but there are bodies involved, and looking is allowed: or rather we are allowed to look, and the fact that Elizabeth isn't is itself a token of how strongly they both feel.

The main declaration scene of *Sense and Sensibility* is, perhaps surprisingly, not that of Marianne but of Elinor.

Elinor could sit it no longer. She almost ran out of the room, and

as soon as the door was closed, burst into tears of joy, which at first she thought would never cease. Edward, who had till then looked anywhere rather than at her, saw her hurry away, and perhaps saw – or even heard – her emotion; for immediately afterwards he fell into a reverie, which no remarks, no inquiries, no affectionate address of Mrs. Dashwood could penetrate, and at last, without saying a word, quitted the room, and walked out towards the village, leaving the others in the greatest astonishment and perplexity on a change in his situation so wonderful and so sudden.

There's strong feeling here all right; but strong feeling you will notice causes not contact but separation. Elinor's joy leads her not (as it would in any modern story) to throw herself at Edward, but to rush away from him. Edward's joy (for Edward, let's be frank, is rather a wet) might, one would have thought, have taken him after her, for he is not, after all, overcome as she is by delighted surprise: but no – he hurried out 'towards the village'. Not much danger of any unauthorised kissing there.

So much for the early novels. Is it any different in the later ones – in *Emma*, for instance? What did Emma say when Mr Knightley proposed? You all know the answer to that: 'Just what she ought, of course. A lady always does.' For Jane Austen to keep her distance from the heroes is very proper, and ladylike: but why need she in this way keep it from her heroine? Is she embarrassed at the thought of what Emma did say? Does she fear she might not be able to handle it, or might not wish to? Is this the moment to remind ourselves that Jane Austen was the contemporary of Dr Bowdler, whose *Family Shakespeare*, in which the plays of the immortal bard are 'unsullied by any scene, by any speech, or if possible by any word that can give pain to the most chaste, or offence to the most religious of his readers', came out in 1818, the year after Jane Austen's death?

Or am I being unfair? Am I looking in the wrong place for signs of true sexual passion? Perhaps the whole subtlety of Jane Austen's fiction consists in indirection, in the fact that intense feeling occurs not in the place we expect it, but obliquely expressed where we are not waiting for it. Let us take, for instance, that most classic of the symbolic expressions of sexuality, a ball. There is a ball in *Emma*, and it is not without emotion.

She was more disturbed by Mr. Knightley's not dancing than by anything else. There he was, among the standers-by, where he ought not to be; he ought to be dancing, not classing himself with the husbands, and fathers, and whist-players, who were pretending to feel an interest in the dance till their rubbers were made up, – so young as he looked! He could not have appeared to greater advantage perhaps anywhere, than where he had placed himself. His tall, firm, upright figure, among the bulky forms and stooping shoulders of the elderly men, was such as Emma felt must draw everybody's eyes; and, excepting her own partner, there was not one among the whole row of young men who could be compared

with him. He moved a few steps nearer, and those few steps were enough to prove in how gentlemanlike a manner, with what natural grace, he must have danced, would he but take the trouble.

At this stage of the story Emma still thinks – and we still think, unless we are reading it for the second time, or reading very perceptively – that Frank Churchill is the man. But read the passage carefully: it's obvious, isn't it, that Mr Knightley is really the man. Emma is like one of those lovers in an Elizabethan comedy – like Orsino, say – who have fallen in love without suspecting it, or rather who have fallen in love with one person while thinking they are in love with another, and for whom an awakening is prepared that will teach them what, deep down, they already know. That brief qualification – 'excepting her own partner' – should not deceive us for a moment: Emma has dropped it in as a sop to the surface of her mind, but really she does not for a moment believe that either Frank Churchill or anyone else can compare with him. And there's no doubt this time that Mr Knightley has a body – a 'tall, firm, upright figure' – to which she is greatly attracted, though the rule of 'No Touching' still, you will notice, obtains.

And now for some touching – and more than touching. Now for picking up the heroine in one's arms and carrying her. We can hardly ask for anything bolder than that, surely: can it really occur in Jane Austen? Well, there has to be an excuse for it of course.

They set off. Marianne had at first the advantage, but a false step brought her suddenly to the ground, and Margaret, unable to stop herself to assist her, was involuntarily hurried along, and reached the bottom in safety.

A gentleman carrying a gun, with two pointers playing round him, was passing up the hill and within a few yards of Marianne, when her accident happened. He put down his gun and ran to her assistance. She had raised herself from the ground, but her foot had been twisted in the fall, and she was scarcely able to stand. The gentleman offered his services, and perceiving that her modesty declined what her situation rendered necessary, took her up in his arms without further delay, and carried her down the hill. Then passing through the garden, the gate of which had been left open by Margaret, he bore her directly into the house, whither Margaret was just arrived, and quitted not his hold till he had seated her in a chair in the parlour.

Elinor and her mother rose up in amazement at their entrance, and while the eyes of both were fixed on him with an evident wonder and a secret admiration which equally sprung from his appearance, he apologized for his intrusion by relating its cause, in a manner so frank and so graceful, that his person, which was uncommonly handsome, received additional charms from his voice and expression. Had he been even old, ugly, and vulgar, the gratitude and kindness of Mrs. Dashwood would have been secured by any act of attention to her child; but the influence of



The Rev. John Thomas Austen, 1794–1876
from the portrait by Louisa Roberts, 1852

Second cousin to Jane Austen, he was Rector of West Wickham, Kent, 1848–1876. *Reproduced by permission of the Rev. & Mrs John Poole, of the Parish Church, West Wickham.*

youth, beauty, and elegance, gave an interest to the action which came home to her feelings.

This is indirection of a different sort: a situation that has great sexual potential, but a perfectly respectable justification. It is – shall we say? – the respectable 19th century equivalent of those modern novels in which hero and heroine first sleep together and subsequently fall in love. But there is another difference, besides the respectability. The really shrewd reader of Jane Austen might realise, even from reading this scene, which occurs very early in the book, that this is not the man Marianne is going to marry. There's no doubt of his attractiveness – 'His person and air were equal to what her fancy had ever drawn for the hero of a favourite story' – but somehow he is too plausible, too handsome, too specious. There must be a catch somewhere, surely. Above all, he has done what is really unpardonable, he has laid hands on the heroine's lovely body when he had no right to.

Perhaps the most interesting commentary on his scene occurs not in any of Jane Austen's sophisticated modern critics, but in the novel itself, and is made by the tactless and shallow Sir John Middleton.

'Yes, Yes, he is very well worth catching I can tell you, Miss Dashwood; he has a pretty little estate of his own in Somersetshire besides; and if I were you, I would not give him up to my younger sister in spite of all this tumbling down hills. Miss Marianne must not expect to have all the men to herself. Brandon will be jealous, if she does not take care.'

'I do not believe,' said Mrs. Dashwood, with a good-humoured smile, 'that Mr. Willoughby will be incommoded by the attempts of either of my daughters towards what you call catching him. It is not an employment to which they have been brought up. Men are very safe with us, let them be ever so rich. I am glad to find, however, from what you say, that he is a respectable young man, and one whose acquaintance will not be ineligible.'

'He is as good a sort of fellow, I believe, as ever lived,' repeated Sir John. 'I remember last Christmas, at a little hop at the Park, he danced from eight o'clock till four, without once sitting down.'

'Did he, indeed?' cried Marianne, with sparkling eyes, 'and with elegance, with spirit?'

'Yes; and he was up again at eight to ride to covert.'

'That is what I like; that is what a young man ought to be. Whatever be his pursuits, his eagerness in them should know no moderation, and leave him no sense of fatigue.'

'Aye, aye, I see how it will be,' said Sir John, 'I see how it will be. You will be setting your cap at him now, and never think of poor Brandon.'

'That is an expression, Sir John, said Marianne warmly, 'which I particularly dislike. I abhor every common-place phrase by which wit is intended; and "setting one's cap at a man", or "making a conquest", are the most odious of all. Their tendency is

gross and illiberal; and if their construction could ever be deemed clever, time has long ago destroyed all its ingenuity.'

Sir John did not much understand this reproof; but he laughed as heartily as if he did, and then replied,—

'Aye, you will make conquests enough, I dare say, one way or other. Poor Brandon! he is quite smitten already, and he is very well worth setting your cap at, I can tell you, in spite of all this tumbling about and spraining of ankles.'

Look at all those *gaffes*. Not only is Sir John's language vulgar ('setting your cap' indeed!) but so is the content of what he says. You would almost think, to listen to him, that Marianne fell down on purpose, that spraining one's ankle was a way of catching a man. How right of Mrs Dashwood to rebuke him, to make it clear that her daughters have not been brought up to 'catch' men.

What we have here is the standard method of Jane Austen's satire. What Sir John is doing is what always draws the author's mockery: he is (shall we be as vulgar as he?) letting the cat out of the bag, spilling the beans – quite simply, telling the truth. He is stating openly what the book is about, and what a lady or gentleman does not state openly. In Jane Austen, as in Shakespearean comedy, there is nothing like a really stupid character for telling us what is really going on.

For if the Dashwood girls have not been brought up – like all girls in their position – to catch a man, one would like to ask what they have been brought up to do. What does Mrs Dashwood mean when she says 'men are quite safe with them'? That a man, be he never so rich is in no danger of marrying either of them? But marrying is the main concern, in that society, of all who are young, and all responsible for the young. 'The business of her life was to get her daughters married,' says Jane Austen of the horrid Mrs Bennet: was Mrs Dashwood any less concerned about her daughters' welfare than Mrs Bennet?

What she means of course (though it is not a point she would dream of making explicitly) is that her daughters have not been brought up to be *forward*. Their concern is to gain a husband, but they have been trained to pretend that nothing is further from their thoughts, that when they accept a proposal it is with reluctance and to oblige the importunate male.

You may feel that Mrs Dashwood was not really doing right by her daughters, bringing them up like that. If they show too much reluctance to get married, is there not a danger that they will stay single: Miss Bates is an example of what happens to you then. But of course there is no danger. The Dashwood girls do not need to set their cap at anyone, because the author does it for them. This is the advantage of being in a novel instead of the real world: you can be as coy and maidenly as you (and the man) like, you will be looked after by the plot.

I remarked that to look for sexual passion in the declaration scenes of Jane Austen's novels may be to look in the wrong place. This can mean two things: its expression may be oblique, or may be freer when

illicit. Emma looking at Mr Knightley at the ball expresses the feeling that receives no expression during the proposal, but which we are to assume was there. Willoughby carrying Marianne down the hill is partly oblique (physical contact precedes attraction) but also partly illicit (Willoughby, it turns out, is not after all worthy of Marianne). For the expression of a completely illicit passion that quite consciously looks for oblique expression to legitimise itself, we can turn to *Lovers Vows*.

You will recall that when Sir Thomas Bertram was away in the West Indies looking after his estates, his children took advantage of his absence to put on amateur theatricals; and their choice of play was an altogether unsuitable romance by Kotzebue. They certainly did Kotzebue a good turn by this choice, for instead of being totally forgotten, *Lovers Vows* is now read by the occasional Jane Austen enthusiast.

The play begins with a loving reunion between mother and son, and these parts are played by Henry Crawford (who, as Fanny observes, is much the best actor of the party) and Maria Bertram, who is engaged to be married to Mr Rushworth, but in the scenes with Henry acts well – ‘too well’. It is quite clear to author and reader what is going on, and Mary Crawford (not for the only time the author’s spokesman) spells it out for us:

And the theatre is engaged, of course, by those indefatigable rehearsers, Agatha and Frederick. If they are not perfect, I shall be surprised. By-the-bye, I looked in upon them five minutes ago, and it happened to be exactly at one of the times when they were trying not to embrace and Mr. Rushworth was with me. I thought he began to look a little queer, so I turned it off as well as I could, by whispering to him, ‘We shall have an excellent Agatha, there is something so maternal in her manner, so completely maternal in her voice and countenance’. Was not that well done of me? He brightened up directly.

It is moments like this which give plausibility to the suggestion that a streak of disapproval of acting itself runs through *Mansfield Park*. When all the rational objections have been made to what the party was doing – that they ought not to have acted without Sir Thomas’ permission, especially since he was likely to have disapproved; that the choice of play was quite unsuitable – there still seems to be something left over, a feeling that they are pretending in a way one should not pretend. If this is so – if there is a touch of Puritan disapproval of the stage in this most puritanical of Jane Austen’s novels – then it will be seen most clearly in the way a dangerous sexual situation is encouraged, and receives a kind of pseudo-legitimation, through these constant rehearsals.

I do not I am sure need to remind you that Mary is as guilty as Henry. Though she can clearly see what is going on when her brother is on stage, she too is using the play for her own ends, these being to set her cap at Edmund. Mary was not brought up as well as the Dashwood girls, and she *does* set out to try and catch a man. And here we see that to be a character in fiction is only an advantage if you are

the heroine. Mary has not got the author on her side, and however skilfully – and unscrupulously – she plays her cards, she is doomed to disappointment in the end.

Love is of the body, Lovers' souls must descend
T'affections and to faculties
Which sense may reach and apprehend,
Else a great Prince in Prison lies.

In Jane Austen, the admission that love is of the body is at most indirect, and is almost completely absent from those moments when we might most expect it to be present, the moments when the lovers declare their passion. Even in the happiest and most intense of her declaration scenes, there is nothing of the body. When Anne and Wentworth, at the end of *Persuasion*, have at last come together and confessed their love,

Soon words enough had passed between them to decide their direction towards the comparatively quiet and retired gravel-walk, where the power of conversation would make the present hour a blessing indeed; and prepare it for all the immortality which the happiest recollections of their own future lives could bestow. There they exchanged again those feelings and those promises which had once before seemed to secure every thing, but which had been followed by so many, many years of division and estrangement. There they returned again into the past, more exquisitely happy, perhaps, in their re-union, than when it had been first projected; more tender, more tried, more fixed in a knowledge of each other's character, truth, and attachment; more equal to act, more justified in acting. And there, as they slowly paced the gradual ascent, heedless of every group around them, seeing neither sauntering politicians, bustling house-keepers, flirting girls, nor nursery-maids and children, they could indulge in those retrospections and acknowledgements, and especially in those explanations of what had directly preceded the present moment, which were so poignant and so ceaseless in interest.

The exquisite rhythm of these sentences is soaked in happiness; and the total indifference of the lovers to the outside world is like that of the lovers of Donne, inhabiting a world of their own, a microcosm created by love:

*Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone,
Let maps to others, worlds on worlds have shewn,
Let us possess one world, each hath one and is one.*

But even at this moment of unsurpassable joy, the lovers obey that golden rule for successful lovers in Jane Austen: No Touching.

I should end here, for my point is made. But I do not want to sit down without doing anything for my young poet, and finding some sort of lover's kiss in Jane Austen. So I shall conclude by sharing with you a fortunate discovery which I recently made. Looking through the museum at Chawton when the curator's back was turned, I found in a drawer a few pages of manuscript in faded ink. I have not yet carried

out tests on the age of the ink and the watermark of the paper, and I'd be grateful for the help, in doing this, of any members of the society with bibliographic skills. It certainly looks as if what we have is a cancelled passage of *Mansfield Park*. It occurs in Chapter 10, when Fanny, sitting on a bench in the 'Wilderness' has watched – and felt – a wilderness of passions: first Edmund and Mary off on a long walk without her; then Henry, Maria and Mr Rushworth unable to get out through the iron gate into the park; then Mr Rushworth rushing home for the key, and Henry, in his absence, persuading Maria to squeeze round the edge of the gate, and setting off with her towards the park; then the indignant Julia rushing up, hearing what had happened, and following them through the hedge. But in this earlier draft, Julia does not find it so easy:

While Fanny rested on the bench, and Julia struggled to pass between the side of the gate and the hedge, there was a sudden tearing sound. Oh Miss Bertram, cried Fanny, I do believe you have torn your gown.

You do believe, said Julia. I am much obliged to you Miss, for sitting so idly on the bench and watching me struggle. It is all very well for you to remain there in such comfort, when you might have assisted me if you had a shred of good nature, instead of sitting there and telling me what you do believe.

It was clear that she was on the verge of weeping from vexation; and tears were equally pricking at Fanny's eyes as a consequence of this unjust rebuke. She was debating with herself whether she should endeavour to release Julia from the hedge, when a gentleman hurried up. He was extremely elegantly dressed: his person, countenance and air so exceeded that of Mr. Rushworth, that his appearance in the clearing was as delightful as it was unexpected. Fanny was convinced that she had never seen him before; but his air of complete familiarity with the grounds suggested that he rather than Mr. Rushworth was the owner. He did not notice Fanny, but rushed straight up to the struggling Julia.

My dear Miss Bertram, he called out even before reaching her, you seem to be the victim of a distressing accident. Pray allow me to assist – pray allow me to release you.

Sir, replied Julia, hastily gathering what dignity she could, I do not believe I have the honour of your acquaintance.

Ah, said the gentleman, it is true we have not been introduced. My name is Wickham; and you I know to be Miss Julia Bertram, the younger and more beautiful of Sir Thomas' two daughters.

And how do you come to know so much about me? asked Julia, already much mollified.

So much? replied Mr. Wickham. Why the merest glance could convince one of that. But in truth, my dear young lady, we are very well acquainted. We are even, in a manner of speaking, brother and sister, for the same creature gave birth to us both. But I trifle

time in speaking, when I should be coming to your aid. And he pressed back the branches of the hedge with his left hand, while with his right he clasped her round the waist and drew her gently but firmly out. As she gasped in relief, her eyes fell involuntarily to her skirt, and his followed.

Good gracious, he cried, you have torn your gown. What a disaster – such exquisite material. I do not know when I have seen a more delicate pattern in blue taffeta. But what an admirable shade of pink is the satin petticoat of which it affords us a glimpse: I do declare, it is a pink that perfectly matches the blush that is beginning to suffuse your neck.

There was nothing Julia could say; and Fanny listened in astonishment. She had never heard a gentleman – and it was clear that Mr. Wickham was a gentleman, from his air of well bred assurance – address a lady in quite that manner. Worse however was to come.

There is nothing like a glimpse of a petticoat, he continued, to offset a woman's charms. I have often noticed it. Especially of course a woman as handsome as you, Miss Bertram. I do declare that Mr. Rushworth has chosen the wrong sister – why if I were in his position: but I'm not, I'm in my present position, which I do declare to be a highly enviable one. He had once more placed his arm around her waist, and to Fanny's astonishment he placed his left hand under Julia's chin, and tilting it up slightly, he brought his mouth into contact with hers: a contact neither slight nor momentary. Surprised and uneasy as she was, Fanny could not help noticing that Julia's gasp of indignation had not outlasted the seizing of her waist, and that her stiffness appeared to have relaxed under the influence of the caress.

She was in great distress, and uncertain what to do. Should she steal quietly from the bench and run for help – and whose help? Sir Thomas was in the West Indies, Mrs. Norris would be unlikely to believe her, and if she called Henry Crawford she could not predict how he would react. Would he perceive the full outrage of Mr. Wickham's conduct – would he even. . . ? Or should she cough to reveal her presence; and so attract to herself the attention of this extraordinary stranger ? While she sat in uncertainty, a youngish lady hurried up. 'In person, she was very attractive; her figure was rather tall and slender, her step light and firm, and her whole appearance expressive of health and animation. In complexion, she was a clear brunette with a rich colour; she had full round cheeks, with mouth and nose small and well formed; bright hazel eyes, and brown hair forming natural curls close round her face.' Fanny was convinced she had never seen her before, yet her appearance had a mysterious familiarity, and the sight of her overcame Fanny with awe. But she took no notice of Fanny, and hurried straight up to the pair at the gate.

Mr. Wickham, she cried out in tones of indignation, what are you doing here?

Mr. Wickham looked at her with a mixture of boldness and fear. Why marm, he said, I'd have thought it's plain enough what I'm doing.

Go back at once, said the lady. You are in the wrong book, as you know very well.

Well, it's deuced dull, replied Wickham, spending all one's time in the same book. With no one to flirt with except that empty headed little girl Lydia. If you didn't make her chatter so much marm I might put up with her better. But as it is, I feel much better off here — and the women are more attractive too. And coolly turning his back on the round cheeked lady, he once more brought his lips into contact with Julia's.

Fanny prepared herself for another burst of indignation, but there seemed to be no end to the surprises of the afternoon. The round cheeks opened into a smile, and she heard herself being addressed. Well Fanny, the lady observed, there seems nothing we can do. I'd better take you away.

The lady had not even turned round. Not only was she aware of Fanny's presence (though she had never looked her way), she appeared to know her; and, strangest of all, this did not even seem strange to Fanny.

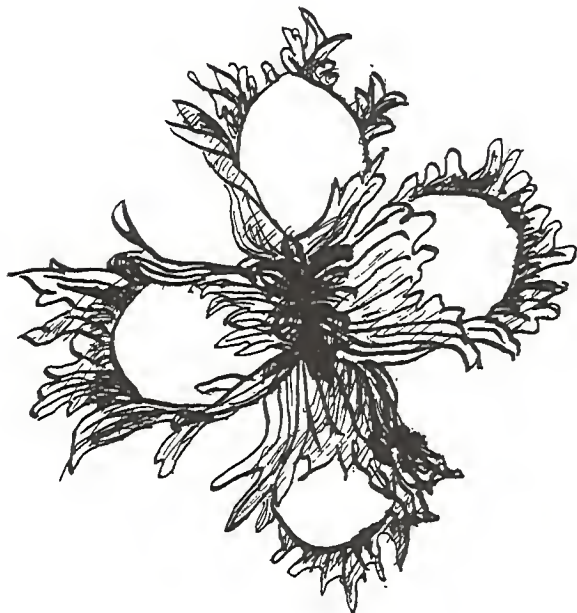
Let us go into the park, said the lady, and leave them in the privacy they clearly require. Come. And Fanny rose, finding she had no power to resist.

But we cannot get out that way, she objected; the gate is locked, Mr. Rushworth has gone for the key. The lady was surely not going to make her squeeze through the gap, as Maria had done, and Julia had failed to.

I have a key, said the lady. I always have. Now you come with me. If things are getting out of hand, I had better do some rearranging myself. I shall introduce you Fanny to a very handsome young naval man, a Captain Wentworth. Not perhaps as young as he was, but you will be greatly taken with him. I did have other plans for him, but looking at you sitting so uncomfortable and awkward, I thought to myself: I know what this young girl needs. Now you just come with me —

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1982



Hazelnut

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J. Butler-Kearney, Esq.; D. J. Gilson, Esq.; Miss Elizabeth Jenkins, O.B.E.; Mrs J. Ommanney; Mrs Rupert Shervington; Lady Smiley; B. C. Southam, Esq.; Lady Stirling.

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £3,
and a single payment of £25 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1982

Membership

There were 80 new members during the year, of whom 23 became Life Members, as did 8 old members. Membership now stands at 1626 individual members and 42 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £3 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in Sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 17th July. In the absence, due to illness, of the President, Lord David Cecil, the Chairman, Sir Hugh Smiley, presided. Some 550 members and their guests were present.

Opening the meeting, the chairman asked that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting, which has been published in the Annual Report for 1981, should be taken as read. He also presented the Annual Report for 1981. This was seconded by Brigadier P.W. Mead and carried.

The Accounts for 1981 were presented by the Hon. Treasurer, seconded by Miss Gillian Teague, and carried.

The Rev. A.L.B. Hay proposed that Lord David Cecil be re-elected President of the Society, Mr. John Gore as Vice-President and Sir Hugh Smiley as Chairman. This was seconded by Miss M. Dean and carried.

The Chairman proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by Professor Christopher Ricks, of Christ's College, Cambridge, who spoke on 'Jane Austen and the business of Mothering'.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Miss Honoria Marsh, seconded by Mr G.P. Easten, and carried.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Edward Knight for lending Chawton House once more for the meeting.

IN MEMORY OF
SIR FRANCIS WILLIAM AUSTEN
G.C.B. ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET
ONE OF NELSON'S CAPTAINS
BORN AT STEVENTON RECTORY
1774·DIED AT PORTSDOWN 1865

*So he bringeth them unto the haven
where they would be' Psalm 107*

Annual General Meeting 1983

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 16th July. The address will be given by the Hon. Betty Askwith.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, 3 West Hill Drive, N W 11.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of Jane Austen in Bath, by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Hon. Secretary.

Price: 50p (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-75

The second volume of Collected Reports is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £7.50, post free.

A Frank Austen Memorial

There is a mural tablet commemorating Jane Austen's brother Frank in the Parish Church of SS Peter and Paul, Wymering, near Portsmouth. This lovely little flint-walled 13th-century church, beautifully cared for, is not far from Portsdown, where Frank died in his 93rd year.

Sir Francis and his first and second wives, née Mary Gibson and Martha Lloyd, rest in the churchyard. His second daughter, Cassandra Eliza, 'little Cassy', is buried with Mary, who died in 1823. Nearby a small gravestone with a raised cross on its surface is inscribed 'M.A. 1843 F.W.A. 1865'. I do not know if I am right in assuming that the remains of Martha were reinterred with her husband after his death.

Mary Corringham

Elizabeth Jenkins adds the following note

Francis Austen attracted Nelson's attention in 1799: when, as Commander of the sloop Peterel, he conveyed Lord St Vincent's despatches to Nelson at Palermo, the wind being unfavourable for

approaching the harbour, he landed his first lieutenant on the coast above the city to take the despatches on by land. In March 1800 he captured the French brig, *Ligurienne*, for which he was made post-captain. In 1805 he was flag-captain to Admiral Louis on the *Canopus*, but contrary winds kept them from the Trafalgar action. He wrote to his betrothed, Mary Gibson, on Oct. 27: "To lose all share in the glory of a day which surpasses all that ever went before, is what I cannot think of with any degree of patience." Of Nelson, he wrote:- "I never heard of his equal, nor do I expect again to see such a man."

(See *Life and Letters of Jane Austen*, William and Richard Arthur Austen-Leigh, Smith Elder and Co. 1913)

'Strangers'

The Lefroy family has three links with Jane Austen: Madam Lefroy of Ashe was her good friend; Tom, the dashing young Irishman whose brief visit to his uncle in Hampshire brought Jane an exciting partner and a refreshingly new face in the predictable line-up of local bachelors at balls and dances; and Madam Lefroy's youngest son, the Reverend Benjamin Langlois Lefroy who married Anna, eldest daughter of the Reverend James Austen, Jane's eldest bother. But how came the Lefroys to Hampshire?

In company with other Huguenot families, during the late sixteenth century the Lefroys came to England from the north of France, then a province of the Spanish Empire, to escape from the persecution of Protestants by the notorious Duke of Alva, Spanish Governor of the Low Countries. No records on the Continent have been found: the earliest mention of the family is in the register of the Walloon Church at Canterbury: '29 Nov 1590 baptisé David, fils d'Antoine L'Offroy'. (The Walloons have been lent the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral for their services; services in French are regularly held to this day in a Cathedral chapel.) From taxation records at Canterbury it can be deduced that the L'Offroys had not arrived destitute, but nothing is known of their business or professional skills.

The community of 'strangers' in Canterbury seems to have remained aloof from the turmoils of seventeenth-century England, and to have concentrated on its own affairs, which in time made an immense contribution to the industrial supremacy of England. Huguenots were surely the first true Europeans. They spoke French, and many would have retained useful contacts with the Continent; their presence here helped enormously to break down the widespread ignorance of England which prevailed on the Continent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



The Revd. Benjamin Lefroy's Rectory at Ashe

It was not until the early part of the eighteenth century when Thomas Lefroy married Phoebe Thompson of Petham, Kent, that the Lefroys would consider themselves British. But by 1760 the only surviving male Lefroy was Thomas's son, Anthony. He joined the banking firm of the Huguenot Peter Langlois, of Leghorn. In 1738 he married Elizabeth Langlois, his partner's daughter – a connection to be immensely useful to the Lefroys. None of Elizabeth's four brothers had legitimate heirs: Peter rose to the rank of Major-General in the Austrian army; Benjamin served in the British Embassy, Rome, and later came to England, becoming a Member of Parliament and Under Secretary of State, and picking up the useful sinecure of Storekeeper to the Ordnance.

Five children were born to Anthony and Elizabeth, but only three survived: Phoebe married a Tuscan nobleman, and as young boys Anthony Peter and Isaac Peter George were sent across war-torn Europe to the King's School, Canterbury.

When the banking business in Leghorn ran into difficulties it was the Langlois uncles who purchased for Anthony Peter a commission in the 33rd Regiment, then quartered in Ireland. In 1763, aged 23, he married Anne Gardiner, daughter of a local squire. But as this reckless folly would have incurred the wrath and disapproval of his Langlois uncles the marriage was kept secret. Five daughters were born and then, fearing that a son might be deemed illegitimate, in 1774 the couple went through a public ceremony in Limerick Cathedral. Soon after, the first of five sons was born – Thomas Langlois Lefroy. Uncle Benjamin Langlois was delighted – and immediately began to plan his education. In 1790 Thomas entered Trinity College, Dublin, then enjoying one of its great periods. He distinguished himself in College debates and won three gold medals. He took his degree but instead of fulfilling his uncle's plans for a Fellowship Thomas decided on the law. But before starting on further studies he was in need of a holiday. Thus it was he went to stay with his uncle at Ashe in Hampshire.

Thomas Lefroy had a highly successful career at the Irish Bar, and in 1852 he was appointed Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, a position he reluctantly resigned at the age of 91. He had also represented Dublin University in Parliament, in 1830 taking the seat from the Whigs. In 1799 he married Mary Paul, the sister of his College friend. She brought no great dowry to the marriage, but after the untimely early death of her brother quite unexpectedly she did inherit the estate of Silversprings, Co Wexford. From affectionate letters in the family archives it is clear that the marriage was a singularly happy one. Ten children were born to Thomas and Mary, and in 1827 Thomas bought the Carriglas estate in Co Longford and built a large house there in the fashionable Gothic style. It is still owned by Lefroys.

To return to Hampshire and the 'English' Lefroys: Isaac Peter George Lefroy (who had come from Leghorn to be educated in England) took a degree at Christ Church, Oxford, and by virtue of his Thompson

grandmother's descent from Archbishop Chichele, as Founder's Kin he became a Fellow of All Souls, Oxford. He was ordained and in 1777 became vicar of Compton, near Guildford, Surrey, an advowson in the gift of the Brydges family. In 1778 he married Anne Brydges of Wotton Court, Kent, and in 1783, uncle Benjamin Langlois purchased for three generations the living of Ashe, an advowson which had belonged to the Withers of Oakley Hall since 1660. The Revd George Lefroy held the two livings – Compton and Ashe – in plurality. He built a charming parsonage at Ashe, and employed a curate for services at Compton, although in family letters there are frequent references to riding or driving to Compton. Seven children were born to the Revd George and Madam Lefroy, two of whom died in infancy. From a collection of Anne Lefroy's letters it is clear that the welfare of her family was her greatest concern and pleasure: her husband's health (he was inclined to 'low spirits'), joy at her first grandchildren – Lucy Rice's babies – and a flow of visitors to the Rectory; parishioners too turned to the Rectory for help in sorrows and disasters. Her letters contain many references to rumours about Napoleon's plans to invade England. The local militia was captained in a desultory fashion by Mr Holder of Ashe Park which irked his eager young ensign, the eldest son from Ashe Rectory. Mrs Lefroy must have had the future of her three sons in mind when in September 1804 she wrote from Canterbury: 'I have not seen Miss Andrews but hear from everyone that she is very pretty and very amiable. Her fortune is said to be about £70,000. It is entirely at her disposal. Her Father and Mother are dead and she has no relation nearer than a first cousin.'

The Revd George Lefroy never recovered from grief at the death of his wife on 16 December 1804. He died two years later, and was succeeded as Rector of Ashe and of Compton by his eldest son, John Henry George. In 1818 the Revd J.H.G. Lefroy inherited Ewshott House (later known as Itchel Manor) and the Itchel estate at Crondall, near Farnham, Surrey, from his uncle, Henry Maxwell. Anne Lefroy's sister, Deborah Brydges, had married the well-to-do Henry Maxwell. While 'writing cards of invitation' 'her elegant and lovely form was on 31 March 1789 brought suddenly to the grave by her dress catching fire while her attention was engaged in writing' (monument in Crondall church). Ewshott House was most conveniently situated on the road from Ashe to Compton. After the Revd J.H.G. Lefroy's death in 1823 his widow, Sophia Cottrell, brought up her eight surviving children there. One son was involved in the last rebellion of boys at Winchester College; General Sir John Henry Lefroy had a distinguished career in the Army; sent to the Crimea to report on Florence Nightingale's differences with the military authorities, he established a lasting friendship with her. His younger brother, Henry, was one of the early pioneers in Western Australia, (he arrived in 1841). He took up land and encouraged two of his young Irish cousins from the rectory at Santry to join him. After many difficulties these three young men established themselves in Western Australia, and their descendants have made great contributions to the state – in the wool industry and in the professions.



Christopher Edward Lefroy



Fanny Caroline Lefroy

Benjamin Langlois, youngest son of Isaac Peter George and Anne Lefroy, at the age of 23, without job or prospects, married Anna, a marriage we know from Jane Austen's letters not welcomed by the Austens. The marriage took place at Steventon Church on a grey November day in 1814, and was followed by a small family lunch party before the couple set off for Ben's brother's house in Hendon where they lived for several months before moving to Wyards, near Alton, which they shared with a family from Alton. In 1817 Ben was ordained to the curacy of Lasham, and in 1819 with their three children they moved to Compton where Ben took services on behalf of his elder brother, the Revd J.H.G. Lefroy, who had by now inherited Ewshott House. On his untimely death in 1823 he bequeathed the living of Ashe to Ben. In August 1829 Anna's diary records: 'My irreparable loss in the death of my dear Husband, who died at Ashe after many months of slow decay.'

Fortunately for Anna, Ben's elder brother Christopher felt it his duty to care for her and for her children. He resigned as British Commissioner for the Suppression of Slavery in Surinam, and henceforth Anna and her family made their home with him at West Ham, near Basingstoke. Her eldest daughter married an Irish cousin; Julia became the second wife of Sir George Kettleby Rickards, Counsel to the Speaker in the House of Commons; the three youngest girls found husbands among the clergy of Berkshire and Hampshire. Fanny Caroline did not marry; she published anonymously a handful of novels and contributed stories to Charlotte Yonge's magazine for Sunday Schools, the *Monthly Packet*. Anna's son pursued a career in the Civil Service. His son, Edward Cracroft, was a minor Victorian poet; and all admirers of Jane Austen and her writing will be grateful to Anna's grand-daughters, Florence (Austen-Leigh), Jessie, Isabel and Louie Lefroy for the help they gave to the late Dr R. W. Chapman. Miss Louie Lefroy lived on to become a founder member of the Jane Austen Society.

There are Lefroys living in Australia and Canada as well as in England and Ireland: we are all related, however distantly. Mount Lefroy in the Canadian Rockies commemorates General Sir John Henry Lefroy, and Lake Lefroy in West Australia the pioneering Henry Maxwell Lefroy. We may fairly claim to have served God and king with equal zeal, and to have repaid the debt we owe to a country which long ago gave shelter to 'strangers'.

Helen Lefroy

What was the History of Fanny Price's Mother?

In Chapter I of *Mansfield Park* the scene is set for the eventual union of Edmund Bertram with his cousin Fanny Price by the outline given of the differing matrimonial achievements of the three Ward sisters in the previous generation. Dr Chapman, in his chronology of *Mansfield Park* (OUP edn., 1966, pp. 554/557), considers that Jane Austen probably

worked to the calendar of 1808/1809. The opening phrase "About thirty years ago" would therefore date the marriage of Miss Maria Ward to Sir Thomas Bertram at approximately 1780. This date is borne out by the ages of the Bertram children, given in Chapter II as Tom seventeen, Edmund sixteen, Maria thirteen and Julia twelve, compared to Fanny Price's "just ten"; by Chapter III, when the main action commences in the summer of 1808, Fanny has "just reached her eighteenth year" and Maria is "now in her twenty-first year", hence Tom must be twenty-four or so. As the counties of Huntingdon and Northampton are contiguous, it is quite reasonable to assume that the young Sir Thomas met his bride at some local assembly, even though "All Huntingdon exclaimed on the greatness of the match" in view of Miss Maria's lack of fortune.

The eldest sister, Miss Ward, was presumably unable or unwilling to seek a husband outside her immediate circle of relatives and friends, since we learn that "at the end of half a dozen years" after her sister's marriage (i.e., about 1786), she "found herself obliged to be attached to the Rev. Mr. Norris, a friend of her brother-in-law", and thereafter joined her wealthy sister permanently in Northamptonshire in the family living at Mansfield.

However, the statements regarding the life of the youngest sister, Miss Frances, raise many unanswered questions. We know that, as Mrs. Price, she lives in Portsmouth, but we do not know how she comes to be there.

We are given no date for her marriage, but the implication is that it took place sometime after that of Mrs. Norris, since the latter lady was already in the position to influence Lady Bertram by passing on the "very disrespectful reflections on the pride of Sir Thomas" which their "injured and angry" sister unwisely committed to paper. A marriage after 1786 is also borne out by the ages of the Price children, the eldest, William, being six years younger than Tom Bertram. We are only told that Miss Frances made the "untoward choice" of "fixing on a Lieutenant of Marines, without education, fortune, or connections", and that "To save herself from useless remonstrance, Mrs. Price never wrote to her family on the subject till actually married". Evidently, then, she was so far away from Huntingdon that not even a rumour of her engagement to Lieut. Price could reach her family beforehand, quite apart from her deliberate decision to withhold this information. But how could this separation and estrangement have occurred? Where and how was Miss Frances living, that she was in a position not only to meet the coarse Lieut. Price but also to marry him in so irregular a fashion and without even a wish to inform her relatives of the fact? In the late 1780s Marines would presumably have been permanently stationed in Channel seaports ready for defence against a sudden French attack; had Miss Frances made her way to Portsmouth, fallen into a whirlwind romance with one of the garrison, and stayed on there willy-nilly trapped by pregnancies and poverty? But why did she leave midland Huntingdon to go to (perhaps) Portsmouth? Was she visiting friends – if so, why did they

not see to it that she informed her family of her engagement? If not staying with friends, was she a governess? – she gives no impression of intelligence or ability to educate children when we meet her in later life. If not a governess, was she too a living-in poor relation to some other branch of the Ward family? – in which case, would they not have acted *in loco parentis* to prevent so unsuitable a marriage? On the other hand, were these putative friends or other relatives foolishly encouraging her romance with the penniless Lieut. Price? Or had she perhaps run away from her family in Huntingdon – was this the reason for her disinclination to inform them? Was the elopement of Julia Bertram perhaps a case of family history repeating itself?

Deirdre Le Faye

Captain Wentworth's Hazel-nut

The characters in Jane Austen's novels often hear sermons. Some of them – Henry Tilney, Mr Elton, Dr. Norris – often preach them; Dr. Norris's, we know are very good: but it is inconceivable that a sermon should appear in her text. (Those three pages of a sermon by Fordyce read aloud by Mr Collins at Longbourn are not specified, let alone quoted.) The impossibility is only underlined by the suggestion she makes laughingly in a letter to her novel-writing nephew Edward that he and she might try to get hold of one of "Uncle Henry's" "very superior" sermons, to put into their novels. "It would be a fine help to a volume." (*Letters*, p. 468).

Perhaps the nearest thing to a sermon to be found in her novels is the mock-sermon preached by Captain Wentworth to Louisa Musgrave in *Persuasion* (Chapter X) and overheard by Anne. "Here is a nut", said he, catching one down from an upper bough. "To exemplify, – a beautiful glossy nut, which, blessed with original strength, has outlived all the storms of autumn. Not a puncture, not a weak spot anywhere. This nut", he continued with playful solemnity – "while so many of its brethren have fallen and been trodden underfoot is still in possession of all the happiness that a hazel nut can be supposed capable of." Then, returning to his former earnest tone; "My first wish for all whom I am interested in is that they should be firm."

Captain Wentworth is playful as well as solemn. But his language has a preacher's tone: "exemplify" is a preacher's word, and several of his expressions have a Scriptural or religious tinge. He is speaking with enthusiasm, in the old as well as the modern sense; he is somewhat carried away. Cool reason is not with him but with Anne, wondering later on whether now that Louisa's insistence on having her own way has nearly killed her, Captain Wentworth is still convinced of "the universal felicity and advantage of firmness of character." (Ch. XII).

Altogether I hope it is not merely there being hazel-nuts in both that makes this reader link Captain Wentworth's "exemplification" with a famous passage from the writings of a medieval mystic, Julian of Norwich. In her *Revelations of Divine Love* Julian tells how she was shown "a little thing, the quantity of a hazel-nut", lying in the palm of her hand; and this little thing was the whole of creation, "all that is made. I marvelled how it might last. For methought it might suddenly have falled to naught, for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding, 'It lasteth and even shall for God loveth it'." Remote as the lanes of Uppercross are from the cell of the fifteenth-century anchoress, here too the hazel-nut is associated with completeness, lastingness, safe survival.

Since T.S. Eliot incorporated some words from Julian's *Revelations* into the last of his *Four Quartets* her fame has grown. Today, for this and other reasons, many people have heard of her. When Jane Austen was writing *Persuasion* this was not so. There had been no edition since that of the English Benedictine Serenus de Cressy, formerly Hugh Paulin Cressy of Merton College, in 1670. And Jane Austen we know chose to call herself an unlearned female. Cressy's little volume may have come her way, nonetheless; more probably, she had heard or read the striking passage about the world and the hazel-nut diversifying a sermon longer than Captain Wentworth's.

E. E. Duncan-Jones

Miss Austen for the Forces

It is as pleasant to be told in Mr Jewson's recent letter that the young men and women in the Forces want to read Miss Austen's novels, as it is harrowing to learn that they cannot get them. Here is a chance of sowing a crop of happiness for the rest of their lives and the seed is apparently hard to come by. If the best and most reviving literature for times such as these is that which gives a brief escape from thoughts of war, then who shall stand beside Miss Austen? There is to be sure in her pages a reasonable number of officers, from General Tilney downwards, but they are not oppressively military. Mr Denny in his scarlet coat walking with Wickham at Meryton excited the young ladies, but on those purely social grounds which sent Lydia into transports at the thought of Brighton Camp. Colonel Brandon "sought the constitutional safeguard of a flannel waistcoat" but it is not suggested that he had caught his rheumatism in the trenches. The sailors in *Persuasion* have rather

more of realism. Captain Wentworth had won prize money: Admiral Croft had been "in the Trafalgar action, and his wife had lived in a perpetual fright" about him during the winter she spent at Deal. These things were however past and done with, and though the Admiral did hope for the luck of seeing another war, he was much more immediately interested in the great improvement he had made in the laundry door at Kellynch. In the creaking of that laundry door there is a deep, unutterable repose. The books are full of the drowsy hummings of a summer garden which can deafen the ears even to the humming of the aeroplane overhead.

After nearly four years of war thoughts of it will break in upon the reader's peace, but in a particular manner. Thus he who reads Dickens and finds, as he often does, a cheerful light in the window shedding its ray across the road may, until he recollects himself, inquire what the local warden was about to permit such an outrage. So it is with Miss Austen, but in her case it is the numerous idle young men who bring the reader up with a start. Surely they ought to be "doing something." Can Willoughby find nothing better to occupy him than "the nicest little black bitch of a pointer" that Sir John had ever seen? Why were Tom Bertram and Henry Crawford idling away their time in private theatricals at Mansfield Park? Above all, there was such a smart, active young fellow as Frank Churchill, going all the way from Highbury to London to have his hair cut. No wonder that Mr. Knightley, who would certainly have commanded the Donwell Platoon of the Home Guard, disapproved of such a trifler. This kind of illusion has its limits, and the most censoriously imaginative can scarcely conceive of Mr. Collins as a padre with the forces. And yet he might turn his gardening, "one of his most respectable pleasures," to useful account: he might dig for victory. At most such illusion is but momentary and tranquillity will soon resume its sway. Moreover to read a book of Miss Austen's once is but to scratch the surface. The new devotee will, if he be wise, turn straight back to Chapter I and begin again, for if ever the re-reader of old books can be acquitted of intellectual laziness it is in her case. No man ever so surely and eternally damned himself as that *Quarterly* reviewer who declared that "the faults of these works arise from the minute detail which the author's plan comprehends." It is those tiny but entrancing touches which sustain the reader and carry him for a little while far away into the land of surcease.

This article appeared as fourth leader of *The Times* of 22 April 1943, and is reprinted by permission of Times Newspapers Ltd.

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David Gilson

Recent Acquisitions

Gifts to the collections at Jane Austen's House during the year have included the following:

- Arnaud Berquin, *L'ami des enfants*. Première année, t. 3, 4 [in one]; seconde année, t. 5, 6 [in one]. Paris: Pissot [&] Théophile Barrois, 1783-84, 12°. Presented by Rev. W. Jarvis. Jane Austen's own set of this French children's periodical is at Harvard.
- Jane Austen, *Gordost' i predubezhdenie*. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka", 1967. Presented by J.S.G. Simmons of All Souls College, Oxford. The first Russian translation of *Pride and Prejudice* (and the first Russian translation of any novel by Jane Austen).
- P.S.A. Rosedale, 'What caused the quarrel between Mr. Collins and Mr. Bennet? Observations on the entail of Longbourn', *Notes and Queries* 225 (1980), 503-504. An offprint, presented by the author

(see Muriel Smith's article, 'Mr. Bennet and Mr. Collins', pp. 13-14 of the 1981 *Report*).

David Gilson, *A bibliography of Jane Austen*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982. Presented by the author.

Notes on Auction Sales 1981-82

- A **Manuscripts.** Lot 426 in Sotheby's sale of 29/30 June 1982 was the autograph manuscript of Jane Austen's letter to Cassandra from Bath, 8 April 1805 (No. 43 in Dr. Chapman's edition), which sold for £11,000.

The same sale included, Lot 68, four autograph letters of Maria Edgeworth to the novelist Thomas Henry Lister, including the comment: 'the author of *Granby* [i.e. Lister] shews the same talent in painting high life that Miss [Jane] Austin has in middle life'; these letters sold for £352.

- B **First and early editions** A first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811 in contemporary calf, complete with half-titles and final blanks, was Lot 490 in Sotheby's sale of 16/17 November 1981, and sold for £605. Another copy of the first edition, with no half-titles or original final blanks, bound in early 19th century green calf by W. Price of Oswestry, was offered as Lot 222 in Sotheby's sale of 25 May 1982 and fetched £352. A worn copy of the second edition of the same novel, 1813, in a contemporary half calf binding with no half-titles but with bookplate of Esther, Viscountess Althorp (died 1818) was Lot 426 at Sotheby's on 10/11 May 1982 and sold for £176.

A worn copy of the second edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1813, in contemporary half calf with the half-titles, was Lot 223 in Sotheby's sale of 25 May 1982 and sold for £82, whereas a copy of the third edition of the same novel, 1817, in contemporary calf but lacking half-titles, fetched the surprising price of £143 at Sotheby's, 10/11 May 1982, Lot 427.

A worn copy of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814, in half calf with the half-titles but lacking the final blank from Vol. 2 and the advertisement leaf from Vol. 3, Lot 491 at Sotheby's on 16/17 1981, sold for £242. Another copy, Lot 224 at Sotheby's on 25 May 1982, in contemporary half calf, somewhat worn but having the half-titles, the advertisement leaf at the end of Vol. 3 and the original blank leaf at the end of Vol. 2, sold for £440.

A copy of the first edition of *Emma* 1816, with the half-titles, in original paper boards, printed paper spine labels, uncut, rebacked, formerly on loan at Jane Austen's House, appeared as Lot 224 at Christie's on 18 November 1981 and sold for £1650 (this copy was

offered as Lot 119 at Christie's, South Kensington, on 22 September 1978 but was then unsold; it was offered again at Christie's (King Street) on 30 May 1979, Lot 190, when it sold for £900). It may be noted that the London bookseller Peter Murray Hill Ltd. offered in 1981 (Catalogue 159, Item 2) a fine copy of the first edition of *Emma* in original boards, apparently from a Central European library, at the very high price of £3,000.

Another copy of *Emma* in contemporary calf, worn, with half-title only in Vol. 2, with the bookplate of William Hale White ('Mark Rutherford') was Lot 411 at Sotheby's on 8/9 February 1982 and sold for £363.

A first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818 in half calf with the half-titles, Lot 492 at Sotheby's on 16/17 November 1981, sold for £352, while another copy, also with the half-titles, in contemporary calf rebacked, was Lot 412 at Sotheby's on 8/9 February 1982 and sold for £231.

NOTE The prices at Sotheby's sales are the hammer prices plus 10% premium.

David Gilson

"Four Manly Boys"

And still in my mind's eye methinks I see
The village Pastor's cheerful family,
The father grave yet oft with humour dry
Producing the quaint jest or shrewd reply;
The busy, bustling Mother who like Eve
Would ever and anon the circle leave,
Her mind on hospitable thoughts intent,
Careful domestic blunders to prevent,
And ever ready on her guests to pour
The corner Beaufet's rich and savoury store;
While yet a gayer group, four manly boys,
Heightened the relish of domestic joys,
Of future happiness gave promise fair
And eased with pleasing hopes a Parent's care.

The verses are taken from the Rev. James Austen's manuscript collection of writings (inappropriately known as his "Journal") which is now the property of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust at Chawton.

The complete passage, entitled "Lines written at Kintbury, May 1812" consists of about a hundred rhyming couplets full of the worthy James' nostalgic and sentimental reminiscences of his boyhood visits to the Fowle family at their Berkshire home more than thirty years before.

The 'village pastor' and 'father grave' is the Revd. Thomas Fowle (1726-1806), vicar of the parish. The 'busy, bustling Mother' is his wife Jane Craven, cousin to the fourth Baron Craven who was a bachelor with



After a drawing from

THE REV. HENRY JAMES, M.A.
Author of "The History of the Church of England"

Reproduced by permission of the Churchwardens of St. Mary's, Kintbury

the unusual name of Fulwar. The name 'Fulwar Craven' was bestowed on their first born in recognition of the help his lordship gave the couple in the years leading up to their marriage. The other three of the "four manly boys" were given the very orthodox names of Thomas (usually Tom), William and Charles.

The friendships between Fowles and Austens began when Fulwar and Tom were sent by their "shrewd" father for tuition at the home of the Revd. George Austen at Steventon to prepare them for entrance to Oxford. James Austen, the eldest son of the family, was at this time a precociously scholarly youth who had matriculated at his father's old college, St. John's, at the age of fourteen. In age he was just between Fulwar and Tom and he became firm friends with both of them.

James' boyish admiration for Fulwar Fowle is expressed at length in two poems he wrote at the age of 15 and 16 and which are both preserved in the Journal. The first, in James' typical vein of pawky humour, is entitled "An Epistle to Fulwar Craven Fowle Esq., supposed Secretary of State in the reign of George 4th, by J. Austen as a Country Curate"; the second, more sedate but fuller perhaps of hyperbolic sentiment, is "An Elegy, written at Kintbury Berks, addressed to F.C.F."

For much of the time that Fulwar and Tom were "boarders" at Steventon vicarage, Cassandra and Jane Austen were themselves away at boarding school, yet no doubt the boys and girls saw enough of each other to form their likes and dislikes. As most girls would, they preferred the quiet, restrained character of Tom to the headstrong impetuosity and quick temper of Fulwar.

In 1784, when the Steventon theatricals were in their prime, James started to write prologues and epilogues for the amateur productions, and several of these are to be found in the Journal. The epilogue to "Matilda" was entrusted to Tom Fowle to deliver; despite the tragic nature of the piece it starts in James' typical style of self-deprecatory humour; "Halloo, good gentlefolks! What, none asleep!" and continues in this vein for a dozen rather unheroic couplets.

The Fowles' cousins, Martha, Elizabeth and Mary Lloyd, came, on the death of their father, to live with their mother at Deane parsonage in 1789. The Lloyd girls and the Austen sisters became, as the *Life and Letters* tells us, "fast friends". The move benefited Tom too, for on his visits to see his cousins at Deane he could always slip over to Steventon as well. By the time Cassandra was nineteen the "tender attachment" between her and Tom Fowle was plain for all to see. Fulwar meanwhile had married Elizabeth Lloyd and having obtained a living at Elkstone had moved away to that remote Gloucestershire parish and started to raise a family.

Four years later Tom also obtained from his patron the young Lord Craven a benefice at the tiny village of Allington, Hants; but it seems that conditions there were not such as to allow the young rector to marry. Cassandra Austen was prepared to wait.

So much for the two elder brothers, both following their father's footsteps in seeking ordination. What of William and Charles? It had long been decided by their far-seeing father that they should follow the two other liberal professions, Physic and Law.

William was sent at an early age to be apprenticed to his uncle, also William Fowle, a hard-working and thriving apothecary of Red Lion Square. Wm Fowle the elder, though he became Master of the Society of Apothecaries in 1796/7, and no doubt played his part in the struggle which had been going on most of his working life to raise the status of his calling to that of a true profession, had clearly made it his aim to see that his young nephew attained the higher and much more respected designation of physician.

Young William was sent to the United Hospitals Medical School, then for a year to Edinburgh, and finally overseas to Leyden University, where he matriculated on 5th Oct 1791 and (according to quite normal practice) graduated as Doctor of Medicine three weeks later. His *Dissertatio Medica Inauguralis* (on the fever of Erysipelas) is dedicated to Chas. Dundas Esq., squire of Kintbury and a lifelong friend of the Fowle family. It is probable that Mr Dundas had made a substantial contribution to the cost of his training.

Now proudly adding M.D. to his name, young Dr Fowle went straight down to Devizes and got married.

His bride at St John the Baptist church on 19th July 1792 was a Miss Maria Carpenter. This elucidates for us Jane's little joke in Letter 17, when, writing to Cassandra some years later about a visit to Bath, she says: "Tell Mary that there were some carpenters at work at the inn at Devizes this morning, but as I could not be sure of their being Mrs W. Fowle's relations I did not make myself known to them."

We may surmise that if the small country town of Devizes already had the services of a reasonably good apothecary and surgeon, the newly-arrived physician might have found himself short of patients. Perhaps it was to occupy his time and make a little money that Dr Wm Fowle translated from the French a short book about the possible cure of the smallpox by mercury treatment: so we may be allowed to wonder further whether that other son of the parsonage, Edward Jenner, who was about that very time beginning his researches on the cowpox and smallpox only 30 miles away at Berkeley, Glos, ever read the treatise "Experiments with Mercury in the Smallpox" (Salisbury 1793) or was acquainted with his Wiltshire colleague?

The year 1795 brings two of the brothers together again, for in that summer, within a few weeks of each other, William and Tom both joined the army. William of course was commissioned as a physician, while Tom (as most readers will know), became chaplain to Lord Craven. His lordship, 25 years old, had purchased the colonelcy of the Third Regiment of the Line (the Buffs), now due to become part of a 19,000-

strong force under Sir Ralph Abercromby, to be sent to the Windward Islands.

The culpable mismanagement and strategic uselessness of this expedition caused Fortescue to describe the 1795 campaign in the West Indies as "perhaps the most discreditable to be found in the records of the British Army." The huge armada sailed from Portsmouth many weeks late, immediately encountered a violent tempest and was completely dispersed over the Atlantic, scores of ships sunk, hundreds of men drowned.

After many weeks at sea a fair number of Abercromby's force, including the Buffs, at last reached the West Indies, but by then it was far too late: the good six months of winter campaigning had gone; the hot weather, with its invariable companion the yellow fever, was approaching.

The Royal Navy flagship accompanying the transports was, so Fortescue tells us, the frigate HMS *Glory*; and if "Jane Austen's *Sailor Brothers*" is correct, Lieut. Francis Austen was serving in her at the time. If Frank was indeed a witness of that horrendous crossing of the Atlantic, one wonders how much he told his family?

In any case the fever struck with its annual inevitability and carried off about half of the gallant Sir Ralph's stalwart but ill-accounted force. The casualties included, early in the following year, the young chaplain of the Buffs. The sad effect of Tom's death on the lives of Cassandra and Jane is too well known to need recounting here.

Lord Craven returned from this appalling fiasco quite cured, his mother's *Memoir* informs us, of his "military furor." We do not hear of his going soldiering again.

William Fowle reaped some benefit from the fact that he too, serving in the Leeward Islands, was stricken by the fever but recovered. He wrote "A Practical Treatise on the Different Fevers of the West Indies and their Diagnostic Symptoms." He could not, naturally, offer any evidence of cause or hope of cure. In 1800 he left his wife and two young children in Devizes to sail overseas again, and died in the pestilential land of Egypt in the following year.

To come to the youngest son: Charles Fowle was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in January 1790, at the age of 19, and called to the Bar a decade later. In 1799 he married Miss Honoria Townsend of Newbury and set up in practice as a barrister in that town.

Charles was only five years older than Jane Austen, and in their salad days the two seem to have been on very friendly terms. In her very first Letter to Cassandra she describes the "exceeding good ball" at Manydown, where despite a host of young men to dance and flirt with she was "very much disappointed at not seeing Charles Fowle of the party, as I had previously heard of his being invited." Perhaps Charles, rather

short of stature (like all the Fowles), had been put off on hearing of Jane's liking for the very tall Irishman Tom Lefroy!

A few days later Jane calls Charles a "good-for-nothing" for having ordered some silk stockings; having declared she cannot afford them, Jane goes on, "I hope he will be too hot in them the rest of his life!" Whether the offending garments were intended for her or for himself, there seems to have been some friendly hanky-panky going on. Some years later Charles again shows his penchant for playing little tricks on his lady friends, when he sends his cousin Mary a "Mameluke cap" – far too daring a fashion for such a staid and self-conscious person as the wife of the Revd. James Austen! Mary passes the fez-like object on to her young sister-in-law Jane to wear at the Kempshot ball.

Charles Fowle distinguished himself as a Volunteer Officer. In the earlier invasion crisis of 1799 he was persuaded by Mr Dundas to take command of a comic little unit, consisting of a dozen worthy ironmongers and bakers, calling themselves the Hungerford Pioneers. In the second and greater emergency of 1804-5 we find him commanding the Hungerford Infantry (a corps that eventually numbered more than 180 all ranks), and promoted to the rank of major.

Charles shared with his elder brother Fulwar the glories of the Bulmarsh Heath Review at Reading, when HM George III personally inspected all his Berkshire Volunteers. Fulwar had gained the distinction of being given command of a Rifle Compny, the Rifle regiments newly raised by Col. John Moore and Col. Manningham being the elite of the army at this time. His unit was 232 strong, with 11 officers, Paymaster, Quartermaster, Sergeant Major, 12 Sergeants, 12 Corporals, 4 drummers and 190 privates.

It was on June 8th 1805 that Lt. Col. the Rev Fulwar Fowle, C O of the Kintbury Infantry Company (Rifle) achieved his moment of glory when His Majesty said to him, "I knew that you were a good clergyman and a good man; now I know that you are a good officer."

On another occasion George III said of Fulwar Fowle, "he is the best preacher, the best officer and the best rider to hounds in all my royal county of Berkshire."

To return to Charles: it may be that his health broke down very suddenly, for in April 1805 Jane writes to Cassandra that he has taken a house in Bath "from Michaelmas". Then in February 1806 comes the announcement in the Reading Mercury: "On Wednesday last died, after three weeks illness, at his brother's house at Kintbury, Charles Fowle Esq, of Kensington Place, Bath, Barrister-at-Law and Major Commandant of the Hungerford Volunteer Infantry."

It appears from the record that Charles died on the day of his own father's funeral, 12th February 1806. We may imagine the crushing effect upon Fulwar as he had to look to the burial of his father and the last of his three brothers in the same week.

Fulwar Craven lived on until 1840 as Vicar of Kintbury and died on the 9th March in that year, ten months after his wife Elizabeth. His fame as a crusty-tempered fox-hunting parson is well documented; not so well known perhaps is the creditable part he played in the Hungerford Riots of 1830, when at the age of 66 he intervened courageously on several occasions and contrived to combine his loyalty to the establishment as a magistrate with a truly human feeling for the desperate and starving labourers.

Apart from their connections with Jane Austen, the lives of these four sons of the parsonage, here sketched in briefest outline, form a fascinating paradigm of the social changes taking place as we pass from the eighteenth into the nineteenth century.

George Sawtell

Jane Austen and the Business of Mothering

CHRISTOPHER RICKS

It is a half-truth universally acknowledged that Jane Austen disliked babies and didn't blankly like children. The other half-truth – that she sometimes loved babies and often loved children – is clear enough from her family life, where, for every chastening coolness about the little ones, there can be found a heart-warming admission. Katherine Mansfield flourished a rhetorical question: 'Can we picture Jane Austen caring – except in a delightfully wicked way – ... that people said she was no lady, was not fond of children...?' Well, yes, since you ask, we can. She would have repudiated the idea that she was not fond of children almost as crisply as the idea that she was no lady. The fondness of a fond parent is a travesty of true fondness. 'I saw their little girl, & very small & very pretty she is... Harriet's fondness for her seems just what is amiable & natural, & not foolish'. This way of putting it is not so foolish (or unamiable) as to equate the natural with the objective and rational.

Brigid Brophy has observed that 'some of Jane Austen's funniest sarcasms are against babies. It was a peculiarity of that most rational woman that she held it against babies that they were not rational. More bitterly still, she held it against mothers that they showed irrational adoration of their babies'. Miss Brophy is moved to speculate that, deep down, Jane Austen may have been protesting against the putting-away of her mentally defective brother George. Yet it should be said that Jane Austen was not sarcastic but ironical, and this not about babies but about parental folly and crass flattery, and moreover that, if she held it against mothers that they irrationally doted, she knew perfectly well that even an unsentimental aunt was not – and should not be – immune to the irrationality of family love:

I spent two or three days with your Uncle & Aunt lately, and though the Children are sometimes very noisy & not under such Order as they ought & easily might, I cannot help liking & even loving them, which I hope may be not wholly inexcusable in their & your affectionate Aunt,
J. Austen

Again, if she smiled at parental doting, she did not find it as offensive, as odious, as that travesty of her own unsentimentality which gives animation – and animus – to Aunt Norris. 'She never knew how to be pleasant to children', says Edmund Bertram, with lethal understatement; and it is, of all people, Mary Crawford who is given one of Jane Austen's most deft slightings of children, a witty perfunctoriness: 'I sat there an hour one morning waiting for Anderson, with only her and a little girl or two in the room, the governess being sick or run away, and the mother in and out every moment with letters of business...' A little girl or two in the room: the passing drawl is witty and is not to be respected. It is very different from Jane Austen's rueful haplessness in the matter of totting up tots; as in the running joke of arithmetical correction in her letters:

– and I am prevented from setting my black cap at Mr. Maitland by his having a wife & ten children.

Correction in the postscript: ‘I scandalized her nephew cruelly; he has but three children instead of Ten’. (So she is that much less prevented – seven children’s worth – from setting her cap at him?) Or, drawn again to that round number ten, ‘It was a mistake of mine, my dear Cassandra, to talk of a tenth child at Hamstall. I had forgot there were but eight already’ – where the effect once more (‘but three children’, ‘but eight already’) owes a lot to the parody of a determination not to overstate. A huge family – such as the eleven children of her brother Edward – could be a threat not only to family life but to the art of the novel. The youthful work *Edgar & Emma* knows this:

Their Children were too numerous to be particularly described; it is sufficient to say that in general, they were virtuously inclined & not given to any wicked ways. Their family being too large to accompany them in every visit, they took nine with them alternately.

And then we are launched upon a particularising which finally fortunately falters:

‘Our children are all extremely well but at present most of them from home. Amy is with my sister Clayton. Sam at Eton. David with his Uncle John. Jem & Will at Winchester. Kitty at Queen’s Square. Ned with his Grandmother. Hetty & Patty in a Convent at Brussels. Edgar at college, Peter at Nurse, & all the rest (except the nine here) at home’.

The children at Mansfield Park are not too numerous to be particularly described; those born in Portsmouth to Mrs Price are. And if a novelist can’t cope, how could a mother? ‘The simple regimen of separate rooms’, which Jane Austen would recommend to one fecund couple, has some counterpart within the complex regimen of her novels.

The place of babies and of young children within her novels is teasing and challenging. For, on the face of it, babies and young children are much less important to the novels that one would expect, given that the claim made by the novels – implicitly by their author and explicitly by the best 19th-century critics – is of their so thoroughly dealing with the circumscribed and decorous world that they choose. Sir Walter Scott praised the novels as ‘a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place around him [the reader]’. One might expect ‘such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in’ to give some prominence or salience to this embodiment of domesticity; and ‘3 or 4 Families in a Country Village’ might seem to ask that this central family fact be made central.

Now there are a great many ways of qualifying or resisting such an assertion and of explaining or calming it. It may be said that babies and young children are actually much more important in the novels than they seem at first, or than one’s prejudiced or casual memory acknowledges. It may be said that this act of selection is as principled and defensible an

exclusion or subordination as any other. It may be said that her inerrancy as to what she could and could not do – her understanding of the powers of her eye and her ear – rightly told her that the language and conduct of young children could not much be accommodated within her plots, her scenes, and her society.

But there does remain a challenge of some sort. For one would expect a very great novelist of family life, as she is, either substantially to accommodate this incarnation of family life (babies and young children), or to decline to do so because of a wisdom, to be shared, about life and about art, and not just because of personal experience or inexperience, temperamental affinity, or craftsmanlike prudence – all of which are proper contingencies but all of which are transcended by the greatest art. Simply: what truth about life, and perhaps about art, is Jane Austen in possession of when she so much subordinates babies and young children? What challenge to our usual feelings, or illusions of feeling, do the novels constitute in this matter? The evidence of her life and of her letters makes it unquestionable that she was greatly interested in children, loved them and was loved by them. Lord David Cecil is moved here to some of the most eloquent and touching pages of his *Portrait of Jane Austen*. So the novels are shaped not by personal limitation but by humane belief and artistic decision; and in a great writer, artistic decision is something more than convenience or caniness.

To some degree, her decision seems to me to constitute her admonishing a world – a society and a literature – which was fast becoming child-fixated, and was to become baby-fixated, to keep a sense of proportion. You might apply to Jane Austen's art, in comparison with countless poems and novels then and since, a form of Dr Johnson's famous commendation of Shakespeare. For Johnson, Shakespeare was great because he did not minister to the over-estimation of romantic love. Jane Austen was great because she did not minister to the over-estimation of parental and filial love. To which might be added a different, though not contradictory, admonition; not that such love is less important than we have got into the way of believing or pretending to believe, but that insofar as such love is truly important, it is far less imaginable – less shareable – than we have allowed ourselves to admit. The supreme irrationality and credulity would then not be a parent's love for a child, say, but our supposing that in daily life we can much enter into such feelings in others. This would be a counterpart in the household world to that truth about the great world which she famously expressed a propos of a battle in the Peninsular War: 'How horrible it is to have so many people killed and what a blessing one cares for none of them'. This is an irony, not a sarcasm or a cynicism; it means what it says, and is careful to say 'cares *for* none of them', not 'cares about'.

The limits of our daily imagination, even at its most generous, are much more strict than we like to concede. The same goes, to some extent, for the limits of the sympathetic imagination in art. When Milton tells of the pain of a mother seeking her child, the pain which he makes us feel is not that of the mother but that of contemplating her pain; we have the

further, albeit lesser, pain of acknowledging our exclusion from these greatest pains;

*Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers
Her self a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world;* (Paradise Lost, IV 268-72)

All that pain, not *this* pain. Such is not a failure to imagine Ceres' pain, but a success in imagining the inevitable failure of even the greatest imaginings in art, in the face of such suffering in life. Jane Austen's comedy, for all its differences from epic, seems to me to share Milton's apprehension, that the greatest art will imagine an authentic acknowledgment of the limits of imagination.

For her, the nub is the profundity of privacy. Miss Lascelles was profoundly respectful of her 'habitual preference for respecting her lovers' privacy':

'I shall not dwell minutely on this Part of my Hero's Life', Sarah Fielding says, 'as I have too much Regard for my Readers to make them third Persons to Lovers'. David Simple (1744)... I think that Jane Austen would have agreed with her unreservedly.

Indeed, and there are more kinds of lover than romantic or erotic lovers; the idea of lovers' privacy would accommodate the privacy of parent and child, and might value a novelist who had too much regard for us as readers than to make us third persons to these lovers too. The shocked embarrassment with which parental and filial privacy are violated in such a novel as *The Way of All Flesh* or *Sons and Lovers* is the condition of gains and losses as art. We know how fiercely D. H. Lawrence deplored Jane Austen's being so *apart*; the right retort would not be to deny it, but to ask what it is that a writer can see and show by stationing himself or herself apart.

But let me return to some of these tangents on the matter, and illustrate them. First, is it that babies and young children are more important to the novels than they seem at first? They are, for one thing, found very worthy of attention if only as something which people repeatedly and wrongly believe worthy of attention. There is always comedy in Jane Austen's presenting it as laughable of people to find children such a helpful topic of conversation when their doing this is so helpful a topic to the novels. Children thus become a further topic of conversation (the conversation of Jane Austen with her readers) at the very times when the reported conversation within the novels is ludicrous.

Conversation, however, was not wanted, for Sir John was very chatty, and Lady Middleton had taken the wise precaution of bringing with her their eldest child, a fine little boy about six years old, by which means there was one subject always to be recurred to by



Emma, Chapter 9 (Hugh Thomson)

the ladies in case of extremity; for they had to inquire his name and age, admire his beauty, and ask him questions, which his mother answered for him, while he hung about her and held down his head, to the great surprise of her ladyship, who wondered at his being so shy before company, as he could make noise enough at home. On every formal visit a child ought to be of the party, by way of provision for discourse. In the present case it took up ten minutes to determine whether the boy were most like his father or mother, and in what particular he resembled either; for of course everybody differed, and everybody was astonished at the opinion of the others.

Jane Austen is too self-aware and sly not to relish the comedy of her saying this, since it could so obviously be retorted that in every novel a child ought to be of the party, by way of provision for discourse. The same goes for the later scene, when 'one subject only engaged the ladies till coffee came in, which was the comparative heights of Harry Dashwood and Lady Middleton's second son, William, who were nearly of the same age'. The subsequent argument, all fatuity, adroitness, and smiles, gets much of its magnanimity from Jane Austen's being duly grateful for all the folly; after all, if the subject engaged the ladies, it is now – within the novel – engaging another lady, our author.

For if children are a great convenience to a character like Emma, who has her little plots, the same must be true for the creator of the novel's plot. When Emma is eager to let Harriet and Mr Elton walk on ahead together, providence provides a child who can be most convenient to her plot. Slowly doing up her bootlace would not have been enough;

By the time she judged it reasonable to have done with her boot, she had the comfort of farther delay in her power, being overtaken by a child from the cottage, setting out, according to orders, with her pitcher, to fetch broth from Hartfield. To walk by the side of this child, and talk to and question her, was the most natural thing in the world, or would have been the most natural, had she been acting just then without design; and by this means the others were still able to keep ahead, without any obligation of waiting for her. She gained on them, however, involuntarily: the child's pace was quick, and theirs rather slow; and she was the more concerned at it, from their being evidently in a conversation which interested them. Mr. Elton was speaking with animation, Harriet listening with a very pleased attention; and Emma, having sent the child on, was beginning to think how she might draw back a little more, when they both looked around, and she was obliged to join them.

There is something both winning and chilling in Emma's resourcefulness here; we do not hear a word of the talk between Emma and the child (any more than we hear, or Emma hears, the talk between Harriet and Mr Elton), and there is an unloveable briskness then (the child having finished serving Emma's turn) in the parenthetical 'and Emma, having sent the child on, was...' But then the child does serve Jane Austen's turn too.

A child, in its very blankness and unworthiness of serious attention for itself, can be just the thing. How Is Emma to make it up with Mr Knightley?

Concession must be out of the question; but it was time to appear to forget that they had ever quarrelled; and she hoped it might rather assist the restoration of friendship, that when he came into the room she had one of the children with her—the youngest, a nice little girl about eight months old, who was now making her first visit to Hartfield, and very happy to be danced about in her aunt's arms. It did assist; for though he began with grave looks and short questions, he was soon led on to talk of them all in the usual way, and to take the child out of her arms with all the unceremoniousness of perfect amity. Emma felt they were friends again; and the conviction giving her at first great satisfaction, and then a little sauciness, she could not help saying, as he was admiring the baby—

'What a comfort it is that we think alike about our nephews and nieces! As to men and women, our opinions are sometimes very different; but with regard to these children, I observe we never disagree.'

Emma, whom Mr Knightley is soon recollecting as having been 'a spoilt child' (having been?), is felt, strangely and memorably, both to love this nice little girl and not now to be at all attending to her.

A later turn in the plot demands the intervention of children, when Harriet is rescued by Frank Churchill from the obstreperous gipsies. 'A child on the watch came towards them to beg': 'Harriet was soon assailed by half a dozen children, headed by a stout woman, and a great boy'. It is characteristic of Jane Austen that she should bring the chapter to rest with a comic return to those very different children Henry and John:

The gipsies did not wait for the operations of justice; they took themselves off in a hurry. The young ladies of Highbury might have walked again in safety before their panic began, and the whole history dwindled soon into a matter of little importance but to Emma and her nephews: in her imagination it maintained its ground; and Henry and John were still asking every day for the story of Harriet and the gipsies, and still tenaciously setting her right if she varied in the slightest particular from the original recital.

For Jane Austen's recital, though it need not – as to children – be told every day, is as important to her plot as the incident was to Emma and her nephews. Jane Austen is very good on children as nuisances, but partly because their being so is anything but a nuisance to her.

It is *Persuasion*, though, which finds children a supreme convenience, especially when one of them inconveniences some of the characters. Little Charles's fall may inconvenience his parents, but it greatly conveniences Anne Elliot. It does so by supplying her 'with a pretence for absenting herself' from the social occasions when Captain Wentworth might be present, and by giving her someone actively to love: 'Her

usefulness to little Charles would always give some sweetness to the memory of her two months' visit there, but he was gaining strength apace, and she had nothing else to stay for'.

Then again, the convalescing child, in Anne's care, is what makes possible the very moving scene when Captain Wentworth performs his solicitude for Anne by removing the other child, the boisterous two-year-old, from her neck. There is too a beautifully unforced patterning of little Charles's fall with Louisa's. That Louisa on the steps is behaving like an over-excited child is perfectly caught in the words of her wanting first the fun and then a repeat of it: 'she must be jumped down them by Captain Wentworth... She was safely down, and instantly to shew her enjoyment, ran up the steps to be jumped down again'. Anne, who had nursed little Charles after his fall, is soon nursing Louisa after hers. One of the reasons why there is less than might be expected about children in the novels is that the adults are so often quite sufficiently childish.

The principle of selection, by which a specific attention to a child is relatively rare in a Jane Austen novel, is itself two-edged, since it may substitute for the importance of what is frequent the importance of what is infrequent. Inarticulacy is not at home in her novels, or at least only in its ripest form as garrulity. But the voice of a child, just because it is rare, and the more tellingly when it is reported, can be unforgettable. It is left to Mrs Norris, in her fluent and repugnant self-congratulation, to mimic the speech of someone who is both a child and a social inferior. Mrs Norris is in spate:

"I am of some use, I hope, in preventing waste and making the most of things. There should always be one steady head to superintend so many young ones. I forgot to tell Tom of something that happened to me this very day. I had been looking about me in the poultry-yard, and was just coming out, when who should I see but Dick Jackson making up to the servants' hall-door with two bits of deal board in his hand, bringing them to father, you may be sure; mother had chanced to send him of a message to father, and then father had bid him bring up them two bits of board, for he could not nohow do without them. I knew what all this meant, for the servants' dinner-bell was ringing at the very moment over our heads; and as I hate such encroaching people (the Jacksons are very encroaching, I have always said so: just the sort of people to get all they can), I said to the boy directly (a great lubberly fellow of ten years old, you know, who ought to be ashamed of himself), "I'll take the boards to your father, Dick, so get you home again as fast as you can." The boy looked very silly, and turned away without offering a word, for I believe I might speak pretty sharp; and I dare say it will cure him of coming marauding about the house for one while. I hate such greediness—so good as your father is to the family, employing the man all the year round!"

Nobody was at the trouble of an answer; the others soon returned; and Edmund found that to have endeavoured to set them right must be his only satisfaction.

Dinner passed heavily. Mrs. Norris related again her triumph over Dick Jackson, but neither play nor preparation were otherwise much talked of, for Edmund's disapprobation was felt even by his brother, though he would not have owned it.

The dinner – ‘Dinner passed heavily’ – which is the setting for this sour anecdote about young ‘greediness’ is not made a meal of by Jane Austen, but she has given Dick Jackson the memorability of a pure victim, there in his muttering that his father ‘could not nohow do without them’.

Jane Austen was not so simple as to suppose that children could be seen and not heard. In a letter she could deplore a child's exuberance (‘He was almost too happy, his happiness at least made him too talkative’), but it is the spirited child whom she permits to be heard. Mr Knightley quotes the taunting words with which the young Emma accompanied her saucy looks; Susan Price at first startles Fanny with her boldness of speech, but the ‘fearless, self-defending tone’ is a warrant of a valued independence. What is very unusual is for a child's conversation to be delighted in. Her unpublished writings show both sides of this. On the one hand, there is the genially preposterous opening of *Henry and Eliza*,

As Sir George and Lady Harcourt were superintending the Labours of their Haymakers, rewarding the industry of some by smiles of approbation, & punishing the idleness of others, by a cudgel, they perceived lying closely concealed beneath the thick foliage of a Haycock, a beautifull little Girl not more than 3 months old.

Touched with the enchanting Graces of her face & delighted with the infantine tho' sprightly answers she returned to their many questions, they resolved to take her home &, having no Children of their own, to educate her with care & cost.

On the other hand, there is the ballroom scene in *The Watsons*, where ten-year-old Charles Blake – longing to dance – is mortified by the broken promise of Miss Osborne but is then rewarded by the kindness of Emma Watson. It is partly the fact that in Jane Austen's world we seldom hear a child say something to stave off tears (‘but tho' he contrived to utter with an effort of Boyish Bravery “Oh! I do not mind it” – it was very evident by the unceasing agitation of his features that he minded it as much as ever’); but it is also that here, unusually, Jane Austen found herself delighting in a relationship between a child and an adult and in what they said to each other, ending with Charles's urging her to visit Osborne Castle: ‘There is a monstrous curious stuff'd Fox there, & a Badger – anybody would think they were alive. It is a pity you should not see them’. She has been so kind to him that he is moved to issue these sweet manly little kindnesses back.

But Jane Austen's writings mostly do not think it part of their enterprise to show what a dutiful and loving relation between adult and child would be. They expose cruelty here – as elsewhere – with such



(Museum of Costume, Bath)
From *Ackerman's Repository*. 1809

imaginative cogency as necessarily to recommend kindness, but they do not much show kindness in action. It is certainly a puzzle about this writer so fascinated by education and by what a recent pedagogue has called 'the problematics of pedagogy' that 'thoroughly good training for the young is never directly described' in the novels. The omission is a striking one, and not in itself disabling, but the moments when the novels are importantly *not* persuasive are for me related to this omission or abstinence. The actual language, for instance, seems to have given up trying to *realise* what it is speaking of, when in *Pride and Prejudice* we are told glidingly that 'The children, two girls of six and eight years old, and two younger boys, were to be left under the particular care of their cousin Jane, who was the general favourite, and whose steady sense and sweetness of temper exactly adapted her for attending to them in every way – teaching them, playing with them, and loving them'. Jane may be 'attending', but Jane Austen is not, not really. And in *Mansfield Park*, Fanny is permitted a very easy contrast between the domestic turmoil at Portsmouth and the calm order at Mansfield Park. I should like to think that Jane Austen is not entirely at one with Fanny in this, since an intelligent and fair-minded ponderer of children would have to try to imagine – as the novel never really does – the way in which small children were, day by day, actually brought up in the home of the Bertrams.

But Jane Austen's subordination of children is in the service of a social wisdom, and is offered as styptic. She is at her best in this when she allows us to glimpse children without their getting a look-in; at her best here, because the glancing list, say, is naturally a comic form or device. Hence her pleasure (partly a pleasure of ruffling the doters on children) in the felicitously perfunctory transit.

Their party was small, and the hours passed quietly away. Mrs. Palmer had her child, and Mrs. Jennings her carpet-work; they talked of the friends they had left behind, arranged Lady Middleton's engagements, and wondered whether Mr. Palmer and Colonel Brandon would get farther than Reading that night.

It is the timing (the syntax and the punctuation) of these two sentences which is so right, so equably dry. A writer not of genius but of talent would have paused for smiles, with a full-stop, after 'carpet-work' ('Mrs Palmer had her child, and Mrs Jennings her carpet-work'); Jane Austen has a semi-colon, and moves on, with leisurely indifference, to 'the friends they had left behind' (the child is being left behind by the sentence), and so into all those names (from Mrs Palmer and Mrs Jennings to Lady Middleton, and on to Mr. Palmer and Colonel Brandon), all creating a strong sense of the namelessness and even characterlessness (except to the mother) of Mrs Palmer's child. There is no dislike of the child, but a considerable scepticism about those who would affect to care more for it than for Mrs Jennings's carpet-work. Elsewhere a comma does the work of keeping children in their place. 'She [Emma] did not think it in Harriet's nature to escape being benefited

by novelty and variety, by the streets, the shops, and the children'. Fanny Price is not much like Emma, but she practises a similar subordination:

Her own thoughts and reflections were habitually her best companions; and, in observing the appearance of the country, the bearings of the roads, the difference of soil, the state of the harvest, the cottages, the cattle, the children, she found entertainment that could only have been heightened by having Edmund to speak to of what she felt.

Such subordination will feel legitimate only if we feel too the active presence of those other, higher, ties to which parental and filial love must mostly yield precedence. What is so striking about the famous panegyric to fraternal love in *Mansfield Park* (as Fanny and William retrace their childhood memories) is its unaffected simplicity of contrast. Shared memory: 'An advantage this, a strengthener of love, in which even the conjugal tie is beneath the fraternal'. Parental and filial love are not brought into the comparison. Jane Austen believed (valuably, since there is much to be said for it) that fraternal love is greater than all of its family rivals. There is a fascinating misguidedness about R.F. Brissenden's argument that 'the alliance between Edmund and Fanny has distinctly incestuous overtones... The marriage thus can be seen as fulfilling the forbidden incestuous dream'. For the point of what is said in the first chapter of the novel, and of the relation of Fanny to William too, is that incest is relevant exactly as preposterous. Mr Brissenden seems to me right to suggest that it is meant to come to mind ('My Fanny – my only sister – my only comfort now'), but only so that it may be sent packing.

Jane Austen is seldom willing to grant that one's children constitute the highest tie; and when she deplores someone who wrongly sets higher store by something else, she has usually intimated that this extravagance is an extension of his family extravagance of feeling. Of Mr Parker in *Sanditon* it is said 'Sanditon was a second Wife & 4 Children to him – hardly less Dear – & certainly more engrossing. – He could talk of it for ever'. (And not being a person, it could not talk back or remonstrate.) It is a fatuous charmer who brandishes Scott's verses:

'Had he written nothing more, he wd have been Immortal. And then again, that unequalled, unrivalled, address to Parental affection –

*'Some feelings are to Mortals given
With less of Earth in them than Heaven' &c*

It is this resistance to any easy acquiescence in granting supreme priority to filial and parental love which constitutes one of the novels' challenges. But it does not absolve us from the difficult task of deciding whether an imperceptiveness hereabouts is that of the character or the novelist. When the character is as lucidly self-aware as Anne Elliot and the novelist as lucidly self-aware as Jane Austen, the judgment can be a difficult one. But it has to be made because it greatly affects our sense of just what we are apprehending. One of the greatest and most famous conversations in Jane Austen, and one of the most moving scenes, is the

good-natured passionate disagreement between Anne Elliot and Captain Harville about men's feelings and women's. From a distrust of books and of bias, the conversation moves to an exclamation:

'Ah!' cried Captain Harville, in a tone of strong feeling, 'if I could but make you comprehend what a man suffers when he takes a last look at his wife and children, and watches the boat that he has sent them off in, as long as it is in sight, and then turns away and says, "God knows whether we ever meet again!" And then, if I could convey to you the glow of his soul when he does see them again; when, coming back after a twelvemonth's absence, perhaps, and obliged to put into another port, he calculates how soon it be possible to get them there, pretending to deceive himself, and saying, "They cannot be here till such a day," but all the while hoping for them twelve hours sooner, and seeing them arrive at last, as if Heaven had given them wings, by many hours sooner still! If I could explain to you all this, and all that a man can bear and do, and glories to do, for the sake of these treasures of his existence! I speak, you know, only of such men as have hearts!' pressing his own with emotion.

'Oh!' cried Anne eagerly, 'I hope I do justice to all that is felt by you, and by those who resemble you. God forbid that I should undervalue the warm and faithful feelings of any of my fellow-creatures! I should deserve utter contempt if I dared to suppose that true attachment and constancy were known only by woman. No, I believe you capable of everything great and good in your married lives. I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as—if I may be allowed the expression, so long as you have an object. I mean while the woman you love lives, and lives for you. All the privilege I claim for my own sex (it is not a very enviable one: you need not covet it), is that of loving longest, when existence or when hope is gone!'

It is a famously moving exchange; but this is not to say that its readers are all moved by the same things about it. To me, its profound poignancy comes from the combination in it of a true meeting between the speakers with their being profoundly at cross-purposes, their so painfully *not* meeting. I don't mean their not agreeing; rather, something like the profound misapprehension in Malcolm's conversation with Macduff about the murder of his family. For Captain Harville's impassioned speech has at its heart the words 'wife and children', which then becomes the insistent 'them' as he asks Anne to imagine his imaginings: 'and watches the boat that he has sent them off in... when he does see them again... possible to get them there... They cannot be here till such a day... hoping for them... seeing them arrive at last, as if Heaven had given them wings...' And what is so sad in Anne Elliot's entirely honourable reply is its entire inability to engage with that part of what is being said, with 'wife and children'. She speaks with great feeling, and she grants that a good man is capable of everything great and good in his married life; but, in the

urgency of her love for Wentworth, she can think only in terms of *one* object: 'I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance, so long as – if I may be allowed the expression, so long as you have an object. I mean while the woman you love lives, and lives for you'. It is so different from anything that Captain Harville was speaking of as to make it unignorable that even the most generous and just of people may *need* not fully to attend. I should like to believe that it is Anne Elliot, and not Jane Austen, who for the best of reasons – sheer survival – is not able fully to attend to what Captain Harville said. For Jane Austen has brought Captain Harville particularly alive to us as a lover of children.

One point at issue is whether an aunt may not make the best mother. Jane Austen has a vested interest in believing such a thing, but this has no bearing on whether she is right. The novels bear eloquent witness to such a belief. That a surrogate mother may well be the best mother is touched upon in Knightley's confidence that Mrs Weston is excellently placed to comprehend Frank Churchill justly: 'standing in a mother's place, but without a mother's affection to blind her'. Anne Elliot 'was always on friendly terms with her brother-in-law; and in the children, who loved her nearly as well, and respected her a great deal more than their mother, she had an object of interest, amusement, and wholesome exertion'. Anne is therefore the best person to care for little Charles after his fall, and not his mother Mary, who says 'You, who have not a mother's feelings, are a great deal the properest person'. 'She knew herself to be of the first utility to the child': and the challenge of Jane Austen is in her really concurring with Anne, and meaning *first*.

One way of bringing these various considerations into focus might be to look at a summing-up by Lord David Cecil and at a feminist alternative to it. Lord David has a characteristically lucid and humane evocation, ending:

Here it was that she differed from most women. The creative impulse which in them fulfilled itself as wife and mother in her fulfilled itself as an artist.

In the same year in which those words appeared in *A Portrait of Jane Austen* – 1978 – there appeared in a feminist journal, *Woman and Literature*, an article by Nina Auerbach, called 'Artists and Mothers: A False Alliance'.

Like a lot of feminist criticism, it offers some grounded grievances and much perversity of argument. It is implacably opposed to the parallel between children of the imagination and children of the womb. It has no difficulty in showing that such a parallel can be tactlessly, complacently or patronizingly used. But it has many other difficulties, among them the fact that both of the novelists whom it considers, Jane Austen and George Eliot, made explicit use of the parallel – or rather, metaphor.

The essay is fiercely provocative, and well worth reading. But it is

marred. First, by a refusal to consider the conjunction as a metaphor rather than as an analogy. (Of course a metaphor must have some element of analogy, but in a valuable metaphor the analogy or likeness is not the end of the matter – the illumination is in the relation of likeness to unlikeness.) Second, the argument is marred by its tacking back and forth between two very different positions: one is that writing novels has nothing to do with wombs, child-bearing or childlessness ('Artists and Mothers: A *False Alliance*'); the other is to say, what do you mean the one has nothing to do with the other? – the great thing about a woman's creating a novel is that it frees her from the false compulsion to believe that creating babies is woman's complete and only fulfilment. Now there is something to be said for both of these positions, but they are at odds, and though each may sometimes hold sway, they cannot both do so at once.

The essay opens with a question inviting the answer *no*: 'Do our wombs silently dictate when we write?' But half of Nina Auerbach's argument cannot afford to scorn the possibility, since if Jane Austen and George Eliot did 'produce art that allowed them a freer, more expansive world than the suppressions of nineteenth-century motherhood allowed', the art – in so *escaping* motherhood – is as determined by motherhood as any bad man could wish. 'In the popular image of the creative process, creativity and childbirth are often entangled': a bad thing, apparently, though in Nina Auerbach's own argument the two are inexorably bound. Psychiatrists are deplored for their 'difficulty in perceiving an adult woman without reference to children'; but it is impossible to see what could *more* perceive an adult woman with reference to children than to insist, as Nina Auerbach does, that 'Far from endowing Austen with second-hand motherhood, her identity as an artist represented an escape from confinement into a child-free world with space for mind and spirit, time for change, and privacy for growth'. You cannot be 'perceived' as '*child-free*' 'without reference to children'.

The third respect in which the argument is perverse is in its averting its eyes from the fact that the childlessness of men writers has as often been the subject of comment and critical speculation. In our century alone, D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot and Samuel Beckett are writers whose childlessness has been discussed, often responsibly, tentatively and directly. There is, as often in feminism, a sexism in this refusal to grant that such formulations are not visited upon one sex only.

Nina Auerbach turns to a famous or infamous moment in one of Jane Austen's letters:

Her seemingly callous, unapologetic distaste for childbearing has shocked generations of critics, perhaps because their stereotypes become dislodged when a woman novelist lashes out against parturition. Her most widely-quoted description of motherhood is a Gothic comedy of marriage's abortion and biology's grotesque

invasion: "Mrs. Hall, of Sherbourne, was brought to bed yesterday of a dead child, some weeks before she expected, owing to a fright. I suppose she happened unawares to look at her husband." Considering this ruthless vision of misadventure, it seems unlikely that Jane Austen's novels represent sighs over lost fulfillment.

The discussion of this flash in the letters has indeed preoccupied people at least since E.M. Forster deplored her offering such a thing as 'a jolly joke': 'Did Cassandra laugh? Probably, but all that we catch at this distance is the whinnying of harpies'. R.W. Chapman tactically granted that it was 'naughty' of Jane Austen, and then brought deftly into play (as a rebuttal of Forster's squeamishness – 'no doubt distressing to a sensitive middle-aged bachelor') the healthy instincts of others: 'I once ventured to put this test case to an audience of young women. It was received, not with the pained silence I was prepared for, but with a shout of merriment'. Mrs Leavis, who was nothing if not robust, did not need to test the case, and savoured the moment all the more for its having 'pained Mr. Forster'.

Jane Austen's words there do seem to me amazingly fierce. One suggested explanation has been offered in another essay by Nina Auerbach, which brings Jane Austen's babies explicitly into the vicinity of *Rosemary's Baby*, and which says of this moment in the letters that Jane Austen reveals 'a penchant for Romantic abortions': 'This unappealing tableau is as far from Wordsworth as it is from the Jane Austen many people want to see, but if we think of Romantic fiction, with its demon marriages that become claustrophobic bondages to the unnatural, its penchant for monstrous and aborted births, we can locate even Austen's seeming aberrations in the proclivities and fears of her time'.

I should myself fetch an explanation less far, and suggest not a cultural but a corporeal speculation for the fierceness about Mrs Hall, her dead baby and her ugly husband. We should not avert our eyes from the occasion when Mrs Hall did not avert herself from her ugly husband, and the baby – now dead – was begotten. Jane Austen is elsewhere drawn (perfectly naturally but disconcertingly) to remark upon a husband's ugliness or age when she sees a pregnant woman; as in this profession about Mrs. Warren:

Mrs. Warren, I was constrained to think a very fine young woman, which I much regret. She has got rid of some part of her child, & danced away with great activity, looking by no means very large. – Her husband is ugly enough; uglier even than his cousin John; but he does not look so very old.

But in any case the fact is that if Nina Auerbach were to put the paragraph about Mrs Hall and the dead baby back into the context of the whole letter, she would find it resisted her argument. For the letter (27 October 1798) is full, not only of Gothic comedy about dead babies, but of sweet affection and salutary teasing for little George:

My dear itty Dordy's remembrance of me is very pleasing to me— foolishly pleasing, because I know it will be over so soon. My attachment to him will be more durable. I shall think with tenderness and delight on his beautiful and smiling countenance and interesting manners till a few years have turned him into an ungovernable, ungracious fellow.

This flattening or oppression visited upon Jane Austen's tone is clearest when Nina Auerbach engages head-on with what she believes to be Jane Austen's collusion with the baby/book metaphor. Nina Auerbach does not deny that Jane Austen uses it – famously, of *Pride and Prejudice* ('I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child from London') and of *Sense and Sensibility*. But the feminist critic needs to show that Jane Austen was in bad faith in using it, and chooses the worst possible ground on which to contest the matter:

When Sense and Sensibility, her first published novel, was in proof, she wrote exultantly to Cassandra: "No indeed, I am never too busy to think of S & S. I can no more forget it, than a mother can forget her sucking child" (25 April 1811, II, 272). This triumphant letter contains one of the very few conventionally maternal images in all of Jane Austen's writings, and it is also one of her sparse employments of formal figurative language. The unaccountable conventionality of this metaphor, compared to the indelible portrait of Mrs. Hall of Sherbourne, is underlined by its appropriation from Isaiah 49:15: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, That she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" In casting about for a form for the unprecedented elation of success, Jane Austen seems to have turned to the Bible rather than life. Perhaps she might later have dismissed this sentence, along with its self-consciously Biblical simile, as "thorough novel slang." Though a Freudian might suggest that her unconscious broke through her defenses just this once, the second-hand language and metaphor make their emotional validity dubious: in Austen's letters as in her novels, true feeling cannot express itself in clichés. Though the tangible accomplishment of her first set of proofs made art and motherhood leap together in her language, the borrowed equation seems less a vehicle of spontaneous joy than an index of the paucity of language defining women's achievements.

What are we to make of the antithesis in 'Jane Austen seems to have turned to the Bible rather than life'? For Jane Austen, the Bible was central to life, and to turn to the Bible was to turn to a way of having life more abundantly. Similarly, the easy assimilation by the critic of a Biblical allusion (beautifully bantering in Jane Austen, and with that comedy of seriousness that only a believer could muster) to a cliché is as blank as the assimilation of the Biblical turn in 'forget her sucking child' to 'thorough novel slang'. The 'thorough novel slang' of 'a vortex of

Dissipation' could scarcely be more different, and when in that other letter Jane Austen went on to imagine that the slang was as old as Adam, she was not imagining it in the Bible: 'it is such thorough novel slang—and so old, that I dare say Adam met with it in the first novel he opened'.

The nephew who said that she 'took a kind of parental interest in the beings whom she had created' seems to me better attuned to Jane Austen, in sensing a benign metaphor not a sexist oppression such as bred bad faith, than is her modern appropriator. For Nina Auerbach is more in favour of childlessness than Jane Austen was:

During her last illness she wrote wearily, "I am quite tired of so many Children" (23 March 1817, II, 488), as if they were a symptom of the illness that was wearing down her life. The tone of this letter is echoed in her last and most romantic novel: in Persuasion, Captain Wentworth signals his continuing love for Anne Elliot by removing a burdensome child from her back; most nineteenth-century heroes would deposit the child in the heroine's arms. Adult love becomes the ally of art in redeeming the dutifully maternal woman by an alternative world.

But this is a very perverse reading of that great love-scene in *Persuasion*, which gets much of its force from the fact that 'by removing a burdensome child from her back', Captain Wentworth would be making possible Anne's maternal attention to the other child, the sick child—while at the same time Captain Wentworth shows himself likely to make an excellent father, firmly active. 'She could not even thank him. She could only hang over little Charles, with most disordered feelings'. *Children* are not being removed from Anne; Wentworth loves Anne in part for her loving young Charles, and for being sure to have proved at least a better mother to the boisterous two-year-old Walter than his own mother was.

For Nina Auerbach, 'Jane Austen's fiction subtly reinforces her allegiance to childless adulthood... Like Jane Austen, Emma preserves the fine distinction between the artist as aunt and the "Poor Animal" as parent'. But there is something very unconvincing about using the word 'childless' and the word 'motherless' (Emma 'is motherless herself') in the same paragraph as if they were parallels. Emma, after all, had had a mother. William Empson has said that 'a monk oughtn't to have a baby, but somebody else has to have babies, if only to keep up the supply of monks'. A maiden aunt oughtn't to have a baby, but somebody else has to have babies, if only to keep up the supply of maiden aunts. Jane Austen's novels are magnanimously aware of this. She might have liked the thought that, though a feminist critic of Nina Auerbach's persuasions oughtn't to have a baby, somebody else has to have babies, if only to keep up the supply of feminists.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
Report for the Year 1983



EDMUND KEAN
in the Character of Shylock
Drury Lane Theatre 1814

(The Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson Theatre Collection)

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

President

Miss Margaret Lane
(Countess of Huntingdon)

Vice-President

Lord David Cecil, C.H.

Chairman and Honorary Secretary

Sir Hugh Smiley, Bt

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Francis E. Carpenter, Esq.; Thomas F. Carpenter, Esq.;
Sir Hugh Smiley, Bt

The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £3,
and a single payment of £25 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1983

Membership

There were 92 new members during the year, of whom 22 became Life Members, as did 7 old members. Membership now stands at 1475 individual members and 44 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £3 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in Sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 16th July, a day of intense heat, when some 500 members and their guests were present.

Opening the meeting, the President asked that the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, which had been published in the Annual Report for 1982, should be taken as read. This was agreed.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Annual Report, which was seconded by Mr Peter Stokes, and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Accounts, which were seconded by Dr J. Payan, and carried.

Lord David Cecil announced his retirement as President. This was received with much regret. He proposed that Miss Margaret Lane (Countess of Huntingdon) should be elected as President – This was carried with pleasure.

Miss Lane then proposed that Lord David Cecil be elected as a Vice-President, together with Mr John Gore, and that Sir Hugh Smiley be re-elected as Chairman. This was carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by the Honble Betty Askwith on 'Jane Austen and the Theatre'.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Professor A. Walton Litz, of Princeton University, seconded by Miss Penelope Byrde, and carried.

Miss Elizabeth Jenkins expressed the thanks of the Society to Lord David Cecil for his years as President, and presented him with a copy of *A Bibliography of Jane Austen*, by David Gilson.

Lord David Cecil closed the Meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Edward Knight for once again lending Chawton House for the Meeting.

The Jane Austen Society has been extremely fortunate in its Presidents. The late Duke of Wellington officiated from 1949-65; he gave the Society his support and his presence at the Annual General Meetings attracted increasingly large audiences. In 1965 he did us a crowning service in persuading Lord David Cecil to take his place. The benefit to the Society of a President of such high literary distinction was felt by everyone who attended the meetings over which he presided with so much sympathy and charm. In the month of Lord David Cecil's resignation, July last, we lost a valued friend by the death of John Gore, Vice-President from 1962-83. Most of us on the Committee were amateurs, but he had had a long and varied literary experience and his advice and help were invaluable.

Our singular good fortune continues, however. Margaret Lane has accepted the invitation to be the Society's next president. Lady Huntingdon's literary qualifications and her known charms as a speaker make her a great acquisition; and in the talk which she gave to the Society in 1962 on "Jane Austen's use of the Domestic Interior," she gave a proof of one of the reasons why this Society will welcome her appointment so warmly. Speaking of Jane Austen, she said: "I regard her as simply the most consistently entertaining novelist in the language."

Family Receipts

In Jane Austen's day Family Receipts, including many Herbal preparations, were held in high esteem and jealously guarded. One house might be famous for its 'Game Pie', another for 'Furmity' or 'Tansy' pudding, and a Grandmother of culinary skill would hand down the family's own receipt book to her favourite descendant.

One receipt that has been handed down to me from the Austens' little receipt book is 'Thieves Vinegar', still kept handy on family medicine-cupboard shelves; it is a splendid cure for bad bruises and sprains.

Thieves Vinegar

'Take of Rue, wormwood, Lavender, Mint and Rosemary each half a handful, put in stone jar with ½oz Myrrh Pdr and 2qts best vinegar, cover with bladder tightly; let stand within warmth of fire (or airing cupboard) 8 days; strain, and to each qut put ¾oz Camphor dissolved in little spirits of wine.'

Jane hated to be without a garden; when the family moved house, she made anxious enquiries as to whether there would be a garden. When they eventually came to live in Chawton, Jane derived great pleasure from planning where and which shrubs should be planted; where the fruit trees would do best; and plenty of flowers and Herbs. Scent was an important consideration; she particularly mentions wanting a Lilac; and also states that 'we cannot do without a Syringa'. We can be sure it was the same with the Herb Garden too. Perhaps their garden was like the Musgroves, whom she describes as 'like their House and Garden, in a state of alteration, perhaps of improvement; the parents in the old style and the young people in the new.'

At the beginning of the 19th century, when Herb Gardens were often elaborate affairs, it was fashionable to have a 'Knot Garden', but this could take up precious space; the 'Abour' was also much in vogue, as was the 'Nut Walk'. How inviting they sound.

The English have always been famous for their long love affair with plants and Landscaping their own Gardens; the relationship seems to have been a persistent enthusiasm, a tradition of ingenuity, fun, and above all sociability. We can picture Jane picking Lavender for her Lavender Water, perhaps more than she needed for her receipt, and offering some to a friend she had seen walking past over the low garden wall. Or we may see her walking over to neighbours with a basket of Plums, but on the way home being overtaken by 'a proper pelter' of rain. She obviously enjoyed being out of doors - 'It is March & April together here, the glare of the one & the warmth of the other'. She would look round her, put on strong gloves, take her basket and some scissors for the next receipt:

To Stop Bleeding of The Nose

'Cut a handful of young Nettles, pound the leaves and stalks well in a Mortar. Dip a clean bit of Lint in the juice, and apply to the Nostrils.'

'If Mrs Freeman is anywhere above ground, pray give her my compliments.' Who but Jane would have thought of putting it like that?

Of course in those days the storage of Meat and Fish posed a difficult and constant problem, since only the Great Houses had 'ice houses'. They also ate and drank a great deal more than we do nowadays; therefore there was often need for a good Stomachic, and here it is.

Excellent Stomachtic

½oz dried Orange Peel	2 Drachms Lemon Juice
1Drm Cloves	1Pt Boiling water

‘To a wineglassful when cold, add 1 teas. tincture of Rhubarb.’
Reminding us of her remark to Cassie, ‘Composition seems to me impossible, with a head full of joints of Mutton, & doses of Rhubarb!’

‘What dreadful hot weather we have, it keeps one in a perpetual state of inelegance. ‘Perhaps that remark was written after picking the red rose petals for the next receipt.

Red Rose Infusion

1 oz. Red Rose Petals, dried in the shade. Pour on 1pt boiling water, allow to infuse all night; press well through a cloth to extract juice; sweeten with pale moist sugar, and add 3-4teas: Elixir of Vitriol; the Compound Aromatic Vitriol is preferable, if weak 5teas. will not be too much.’

When Jane picked her herbs for storage, she would know to pick them at the ‘Balmy’ time, when they would possess the properties comparable to the healing qualities of Balm; which was traditionally St Johns day or Midsummer Day; and we can picture her picking them, sitting on the seat against the house in the sun to tie them up, then hanging them up to dry. Next day she might write to ‘that puss Cass’ about it saying ‘it was a Prince of days with us, I went to bed very tired, but slept to a miracle’.

An interesting receipt in this little book is called

Strengthening Jelly

1oz fresh Comfrey root, sliced	½oz broken Rice.
½oz Sago	½oz Isinglass (or gelatine 1 oz.)

‘Put all ingredients in 2quits. spring water and boil until 1qut remains; strain and when cold, fill ½rd tumbler with jelly filling up with boiling milk; take first thing in morning and last thing at night. The Comfrey root may be dug up fresh, or may be had at the chemist (or health food shop) but be careful the root is only cleaned, not scraped, as the goodness is in the skin.’

There is a Receipt for the Hartshorn Drink that Cassandra took regularly for her health and another for an ‘Excellent Gruel’, quite free of acidity; this reminds us vividly of dear Mr Woodhouse when he says to Isabella on her arrival with her family from London, ‘you must go to bed early my dear, & I strongly recommend a little gruel to you before you go, you & I will have a nice basin full of gruel together’.

There is no doubt that the Austens enjoyed living in Chawton village, they liked seeing the coach go past each day; and also loved to see all the Winchester boys come bowling past, at the beginning and end of each term, knowing some of them as they did, especially young Edward; but in between, most of the sounds they heard were those of Nature; the bird-songs, varying with the seasons.

Many people today have become disenchanted with the plethora of factory farmed, convenience foods, and there has been an increase of interest in the old Favourite Fruits and Flowers, and naturally grown Vegetables. There are now many herbal preparations like Rose Hip Tea, and Elderflower massage oil.

I will end by quoting an exuberant Jane. 'I am sorry my Mother has been suffering, & am afraid this exquisite weather is too good to agree with her. - I enjoy it all over me, from top to toe, from right to left, Longitudinally, Perpendicularly, Diagonally; - & I cannot but selfishly hope we are to have it last till Christmas; - nice, unwholesome, Unseasonable, relaxing, close, muggy weather!'

Diana Shervington

The Later Life of Sir Francis Austen

The career of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Francis Austen K.C.B. interests historians and is well-documented. He was perhaps the longest lived Admiral of the Fleet in Naval history and it is astonishing that someone who first went to sea with the Royal Navy in 1788 should have been offered an important command in time of war sixty-six years later.

Much less well-known are the events of Frank Austen's private life especially after the early death of a sister who loved, admired and teased him without reserve. Much of his life was private for after the end of the Napoleonic wars he was only once again employed in his country's service and that after an interval of thirty years and in time of peace. Happily, however, those long years as an unemployed serving officer are recorded directly in his own reminiscences, obliquely in the novels of his daughter Catherine. (just as his early life is partly known to us from his sister's novels) and descriptively in the writings, published and unpublished, of his grandson, John Hubback. Frank Austen, as a cousin and a man, also features in the various essays in family history compiled over the years by different Austen-Leighs.

When the letting of Kellynch Hall was under discussion Mrs Clay remarked "... a sailor might be a very desirable tenant. I have known a good deal of the profession, and beside their liberality they are so neat and careful in their ways. Everything in and about the house would be taken such excellent care of."

As Admiral Croft enters *Persuasion* as the tenant of Kellynch so Captain Austen R.N. may enter this account of his later life as his brother's tenant of Chawton Great House where his fourth daughter Catherine, the novelist, was born in 1818. Soon afterwards Frank and his family moved to a house at Gosport and Charles Austen took over Chawton. In 1823 his wife, Mary, died at the birth of her sixth son after seventeen years of happily married life. In his Memoir Frank's comment is characteristically reserved. "It would be impossible and needless to describe the deep agony of the bereaved". His reputation as one of Nelson's captains stood so high that in 1825 on the death of Hardy he was given the rank and pay of a Colonel in the Marines.



Cricket at Portsdown, from a drawing by Catherine Hubback

After her mother's death in 1827 Jane's sister Cassandra spent much of her time at Gosport. There she tried to write her own letters in the schoolroom where half a dozen nephews and nieces were repeating their different lessons in Geography and Arithmetic under their father's direction.

Appropriately Mary Jane, the eldest daughter, married a naval officer, Captain Purvis, and the eldest son, Francis William, entered on a naval career. Henry, the second son, was educated by his Uncle Henry at Steventon and later called to the Bar. Frank Austen's memoir, written throughout in the third person, now records "Finding his situation very lonely after his daughter's marriage, he selected as his second wife a lady he had long and intimately known and considered almost a sister, Miss Martha Lloyd, the elder sister of his elder brother's second wife, and who being several years older than himself made it improbable that there should be any child from such a union, which considering the number he had had by his first marriage seems to have been much wished."

This marriage had its effect on the Austens. It had clearly been the intention of Mrs Leigh Perrot, the childless widow of Mrs George Austen's brother, that Frank, her nephew and godson, should inherit her large fortune and maintain Scarlets, the country house near Reading to which she was inordinately devoted. Incensed by Frank's marriage and delighted by a simultaneous event, the marriage of James Austen's son, James Edward, to wealthy Emma Smith, she changed her mind. "Marriage", wrote James Edward, "which has sunk my uncle has raised me in her favour".

Frank's memoir makes no mention of any regrets. On the contrary he refers to his purchase of a new home, Portsdown Lodge, as being "thanks to the liberality of his aunt and godmother". James Edward's account (in a letter to Anna Lefroy) of this event is less formal. "Do you know that Mrs L.P. has again quarrelled with Captain Austen, but in the most agreeable way possible, as she has paid him off with nearly £10,000 and told him she will have nothing to do with him. She will find plenty of people ready to offend her, if she pays them so liberally for it."

Portsdown Lodge which was in existence until 1960 was enlarged and 'made fit for a gentleman's home' by Frank Austen. Few traces now remain of its shrubberies and gardens, or the dell which had once been a chalk-pit, or of the paddocks where archery and cricket took place. All this embraced 35 acres of ground close to the old London - Portsmouth road and a little to the north of Wymering church. There must have been impressive views over Portsmouth, Spithead and the 'island'. The downs a little above the house were then well-wooded and, of course, without the Palmerstonian forts which still stand.

With 'Sailor Billy' on the throne Frank must have hoped for a new appointment. His daughter Catherine tells us that the whole family was several times packed up and ready for such an event. Instead he received a knighthood. Cassandra marked the occasion by presenting Jane's copy of *'Camilla'* to the new Lady Austen. When South Hants was contested by Palmerston at the general election of 1835, Frank naturally voted against him, and his brother Charles travelled from Plymouth to do the same, but the coach broke down and his vote was not recorded. Palmerston, though defeated, was soon back in government. While Charles was given command of the *Bellerophon*, Frank received nothing.

Family life at Portsdown Lodge was lively, cheerful and packed with entertainment. Catherine left numerous pencil sketches of dancing, music, charades and outdoor sports which besides cricket and archery included picnics and high speed driving on the downs in very light vehicles. It was a well-regulated but not an inactive or luxurious household. Of Martha his wife, Frank was to write in his old age "Joined to the possession of much good sense, she possessed the blessings of a sweet temper, amiable disposition and what is of far a greater importance, a mind deeply impressed with the truth of Christianity." This was equally true of Frank himself. Cassandra was a frequent visitor and carried on with Martha long conversations about Jane; often they read the novels aloud, including the unpublished fragments.

Frank's sons in due course entered the professions to which Austens seemed naturally drawn, the Navy, the Church and the Bar. Catherine was the second of his daughters to be married. Her husband was a fellow barrister and friend of her brother, Henry. In due course three sons were born. Meanwhile the Portsdown family had broken up. Martha died, and Cassandra lay dying at Portsdown Lodge at the very moment when Frank's long delayed appointment came through. Sadly he sailed away with his two unmarried daughters and assumed command of the North American and West Indian station. His official residences were at Halifax, Nova Scotia and in Bermuda, but much of his time was spent at sea. The three years of his command seem to have passed without much incident. It was still necessary to combat the slave-traders sailing under Brazilian and Portuguese flags. There were troubles in Venezuela and Nicaragua, requiring some British show of force "to protect property from apprehended outrage in consequence of revolutionary insurrection" as the Admiral put it.

While studiously courteous and dignified in bearing Frank had some sharp comments to make on the manners of foreigners. He declined an invitation to the theatre from the Governor of Martinique, informing him that "it was contrary to English ideas of propriety to attend any place of public amusement on a Holy Day." The Americans he met at Saratoga "had some vile habits, especially that of frequent discharges of saliva, and that without much regard to where they may be ... and there was a sort of flippant air amongst the women which seemed rather at variance with the retiring modesty so pleasing in the generality of English women".



*John Hubback's grave in the churchyard
of Brislington Parish Church, Bristol*

Frank was 73 when in tropical heat he carried out an hour's inspection of the naval yard at Antigua. He was none the worse for his exertions but ready in the following year to hand over to Admiral the Earl of Dundonald with whom he had been associated half a century earlier when both men achieved their first commands during the war-time operations in the Mediterranean.

Frank's own account of this phase of his life is characteristically dry. Fortunately, Catherine's fictional version of it based on the letters she had received from Fanny and Cassandra, is also available. In her novel, *The Stage and the Company*, two orphaned sisters are made wards of the admiral who happens to command the West Indies Station. There is plentiful description of the islands and some convincing detail of life on board a war-ship, the formal dinners in the wardroom, the stolen chats with officers on duty, moonlight saunters on deck and what was probably an invention of Catherine, the intellectual in the family, têtes-à-têtes with an intelligent and well-informed surgeon.

Two distressing family events followed directly on the return to England. Frank's daughter, Cassandra, died and the unfortunate Catherine Hubback began a long struggle to restore the health of her husband after his mental breakdown. For two years, she and her young family wandered from place to place seeking to improve the manic/depressive condition from which he suffered. Soon after his return, Frank came to visit them at Malvern, and there left a clear impression on his grandson, John, as a kindly presence in his life. He remembered his grandfather as rather bent with only a fringe of white hair round his head and clear, bright eyes.

Eventually Catherine for all her determined effort and dedication was forced to give in. Before the end of 1850 she parted from John Hubback, although continuing to visit him, and she brought her family to Portsdown Lodge. It cannot at first have been an easy situation. Fanny the younger sister had kept house for her father since the return from the West Indies. Francis disliked any commotion so the three small boys were taught to move quietly through the house; but he was fond of them and especially of John whom he taught to play chess and who accompanied him on his walk to church on Sunday afternoons. When rheumatism eventually kept the admiral away from church, John read the service and the lessons for him, remembering to use the old-fashioned pronunciation of past participles, on which Francis insisted.

But before that Francis enjoyed a sociable and active life. He received many visitors including members of the Quincy family of Boston to whom he had previously presented one of Jane Austen's letters. He became chairman of the company which built and maintained the floating bridge between Gosport and Portsmouth. No great profit accrued from this enterprise, for Caroline Austen-Leigh, in her journal of June 1860 records the disposal for £75 of her three shares which had cost £89 some years before. Nevertheless the Admiral's small grandson greatly enjoyed being taken to sit in the window and watch the bridge in action while Board Meetings were in session.

On these visits to Portsmouth's Dockyard the Admiral drove himself by the lines of forts, across the rattling drawbridge and through the formidable gates, but his driving was apparently as careless and abstracted as Admiral Croft's. He was said to have driven his horse over a wide gap in the road to the astonishment of workmen in the trench below his wheels.

At the outbreak of the Crimean War Francis Austen was offered the appointment of Port Admiral with his flag at the mainmast of the Victory. He had trodden its quarter deck in 1805 and earned Nelson's warm approval. Now an octogenarian he felt it prudent to decline this last naval appointment.

In 1858 Frank Austen became confined to his room, but he lived on to become the senior Admiral of the Fleet. He was to the end of life a faithful personification of that splendidly cool modest and reliable young brother to whom Jane's writing had paid tribute, a man of principle, successful in his profession, comfortable thanks to his own exertions, patient, self-sufficient, unemotional. When he died in 1865 there was a simple funeral at Wymering Church. The Admiralty had offered a Service Funeral with a detachment of Bluejackets for the last Salute, but this with the restraint characteristic of the family his three surviving sons declined.

David Hopkinson

Jane Austen's Letters

Mrs Jo Modert of Mt Vernon, Illinois, has been endeavouring to update Dr R.W. Chapman's edition of Jane Austen's letters as regards the present whereabouts and ownership of the original manuscripts. Members of the Jane Austen Society may like to add this corrected information to their copies of the Chapman edition.

Letter No. 3 is in the Boston (Massachusetts) Public Library.

Letter No. 5 is in the Houghton Library at Harvard University. In addition, the Houghton Library owns an undated, unsigned fragment of a letter from Jane Austen to Anna Lefroy, not recorded by Dr Chapman. This fragment is part of the Frederick Locker-Lampson-Warburg-Grimson Album, deposited in the Houghton by Samuel Grimson in 1953 and given to the Library by Mrs Samuel Grimson in 1960. One side only has been previously published (with minor errors in punctuation,

spelling and capitalisation) in Frederick Locker-Lampson's *The Rowfant Library : a catalogue of the printed books, manuscripts, autograph letters, drawings and pictures, collected by Frederick Locker-Lampson* (London : Bernard Quaritch, 1886), p. 195, as noted in David Gilson's *Bibliography*, item M165, p. 501. The Houghton owns, with the fragment, a note by Fanny Caroline Lefroy dated February 5, 1877, authenticating it as being from a letter written by Jane Austen to her mother (Anna Lefroy), together with a letter signed 'Effie Lefroy', dated only 'Tuesday' (which fell on February 6 in 1877) to Mr Locker, with comments on the fragment she had procured for him. The text of the fragment (quoted by permission of the Houghton Library) reads as follows:

first side: 'If you & his Uncles are good friends to little Charles Lefroy, he will be a great deal the better for his visit, – we thought him a very fine boy, but terribly in want of Discipline. – I hope he gets a wholesome thump or two, whenever it is necessary.' [another line largely missing, but ending apparently with the word 'whenever'].

second side: 'from the first, being born older, is a very good thing. – I wish you perseverance & success with all my heart – and have great confidence of your producing at last, by dint of writing' [another line largely missing but ending with the word 'Shall'].

The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, published in 1975 a catalogue of its Jane Austen manuscripts, including fifty-one autograph letters (the total had been increased in May 1975 by Mrs Henry G. Burke's bequest of eight letters: Nos. 39, 78.1, 89, 96, 111, 122.1, 123 and 145). The Morgan Library has since acquired a copy of Letter No. 102 by Fanny Caroline Lefroy plus "Copy of the Scrap of Aunt Jane's writing I sent Mrs Clement Lefroy, Feb. 5/77" (Lot 268 at Sotheby's on December 13 1977). Mrs Clement Lefroy, born Euphemia Smythe, was the wife of Clement George Lefroy (1850-1917), son of Charles Edward Lefroy (1810-1851), who was the 'little Charles Lefroy' of the above fragment; the abbreviation 'Effie' and the date 'Feb. 5/77' enabled Mrs Modert to identify the copy acquired by the Morgan Library with the original fragment at the Houghton Library, described above.

Letters Nos. 25, 28, 125, 130, 134 and 146 are now owned by Mrs. Joan Mason Hurley (born Joan Austen-Leigh), and are deposited on loan at the British Library. Letter No. 43, formerly also on deposit there, was sold at Sotheby's on 29/30 June 1982, Lot 426, to the dealer Christopher Wood (the present owner is unknown). Letters Nos. 105 (one of three fragments), 112, 119, 128.1, 131, 132, 138 and 143 are also owned by Mrs. Hurley.

Letter No. 26 is not in the New York Public Library as stated by Dr. Chapman, but belongs to the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Letters Nos. 44 and 62 are owned by Mr Robert H. Taylor, and are in the Robert H. Taylor Collection, a private collection on deposit at Princeton University Library.

Letters Nos. 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 92, 120 (copy only) and 126 (copy only) now belong to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust.

Letter No. 108 (a fragment only) is now owned by Mr David Gilson.

It should be added perhaps that otherwise the latest published information as to the whereabouts of autograph letters is to be found in the 1959 revised reprinting of the 1952 second edition of Dr Chapman's edition of the *Letters*, pp. xviii-xxxiii, or in later printings of this (the most recent printing, 1979, gives also Mrs D.H. Warren's ownership of Letter No. 127).

Mrs Modert, whose address is 15 Northbrook Drive, Mt Vernon, Illinois 62864, U.S.A., would be glad to hear of any other changes in the present location of original letters and letter fragments, either listed or unlisted by Dr. Chapman.

David Gilson

Charles Austen's Grave

Jane Austen's brother, Charles, died on board H.M.S. "Flute" off the coast of Burma on 7th October 1852. His body was taken on board H.M.S. "Rattler" to Trincomalee where it was buried in the Naval Cemetery on Sober Island. The photograph of his grave was taken some 80 years ago.

The inscription on the tombstone reads:

Sacred to the memory of His Excellency Charles John Austen Esq.,
Companion of the most Honorable Military Order of the Bath, Rear
Admiral of the Red and Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Naval
Forces on the East Indies and China Station.

Died off Prome the 7th October 1852 of cholera while in command
of the Naval Expedition on the River Irrawaddy against the Burmese
Forces.

Aged 73 years

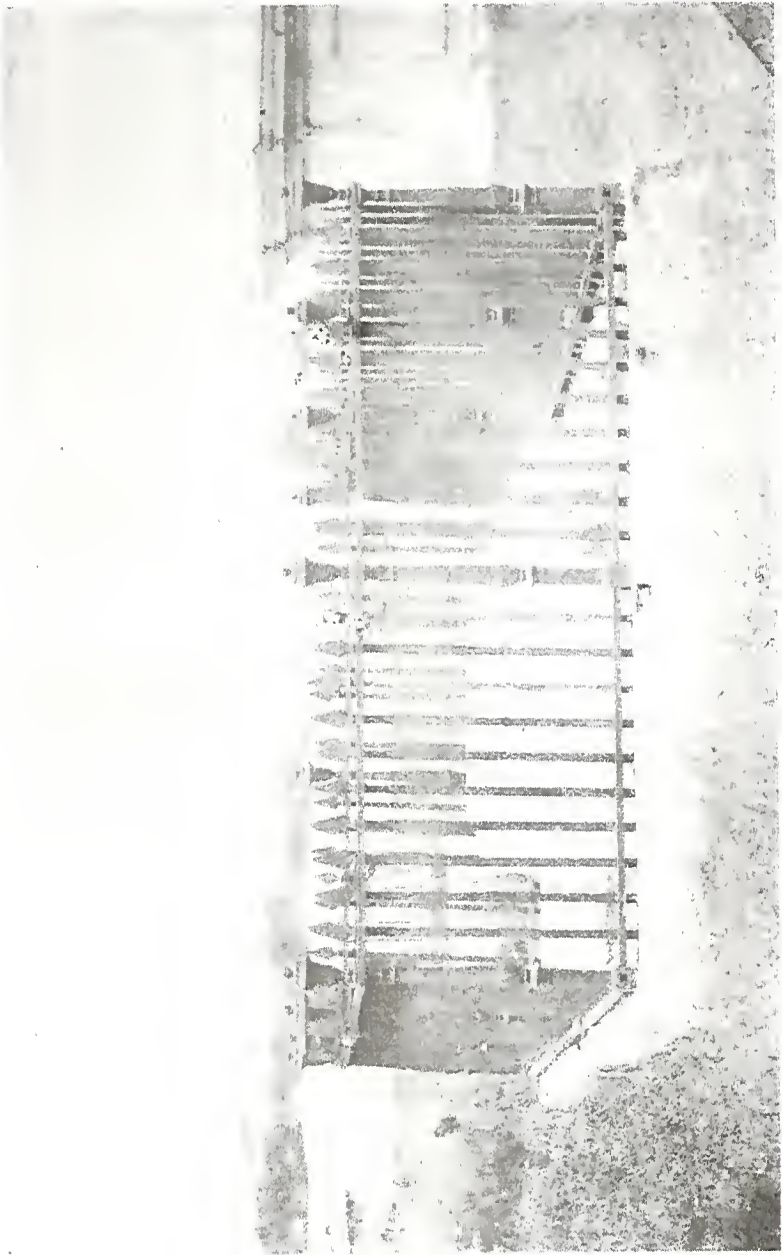
The cemetery on Sober Island has now been allowed to revert to nature.

Derek Willan

A Note on the "Zoffany" Portrait

Sir Oliver Millar, K.C.V.O. Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, writes:

It is always difficult to judge from a reproduction, but I would a) be very surprised if the work was by Zoffany and b) even more surprised if it had been painted before 1800. Indeed, on grounds of style and costume it cannot be earlier. Moreover, if it was by Zoffany, who



Charles Austen's Grave

returned to England when Jane Austen became fifteen, another improbability arises. The sitter must be under that age. On all counts, therefore, the portrait should be dismissed from the iconography of Jane Austen. I have discussed it with the authority at the National Portrait Gallery who is working on many Regency problems and he is firmly of the same opinion.

The Hancock Miniature and Mr Andrews of Maidenhead

Evidence recently discovered by me sheds light on the dating of the miniature of Mrs Philadelphia (Austen) Hancock (1730-1792), now the property of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, and the identification of the hitherto mysterious 'Mr. Andrews of Maidenhead' who redrew Cassandra Austen's pencil and watercolor sketch of Jane Austen that served as the basis for the engraved frontispiece to James Edward Austen-Leigh's memoir of his aunt, first published in 1870.

In January 1752, Philadelphia Austen, the elder sister of the Rev. George Austen, went out to India at the age of twenty-two. In February 1753, she married Tysoe Saul Hancock, a surgeon twenty years her senior, at Cuddalore. In June 1765, in the company of her husband, her daughter Elizabeth, and Warren Hastings, she returned to England. By then, John Smart (1741-1811), the artist who painted her likeness, was a fashionable and well-established miniaturist in London. In 1769, Hancock returned to India because of financial difficulties, at which time he took along the miniature by Smart, then set in a ring. Later, according to evidence in the privately printed *Austen Papers 1704-1856*, Hancock returned the ring to Philadelphia in London. In a letter to her dated 13 March 1771, he wrote: 'Is it not possible for Mr Smart to prevent your portrait in the Ring, which I sent home, from spoiling in India? If he could do it at any Expense I should be glad to have the Ring sent to me as all hopes of my returning to England are at an End.'

As Mrs Hancock was absent from England from 1752 to 1765, it is therefore evident the miniature was painted in London sometime between the latter year and 1769, when her husband took it back to India with him. Another argument in favour of this dating is the miniature is signed *only* with Smart's initials, his customary way of identifying his work painted in England. Later, between 1784 and 1789, Smart visited Calcutta and other Indian cities where he painted numerous surviving miniatures, but all of these are signed with his initials to which he added the additional letter 'I' to indicate the likenesses were painted while he was in India. The subsequent history of the miniature may be found in *The Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society 1949-1965*, pp. 87-89.

As for 'Mr Andrews of Maidenhead', the artist who redrew Cassandra Austen's sketch of her sister (now in the National Portrait Gallery) as the basis for the engraved frontispiece of the *Memoir*, he was

listed in Kelly's *Post Office Directory* for 1869 as: 'James Andrews, artist, 1 Sydenham Terrace, Maidenhead.' Since he was the only artist listed for Maidenhead in the directory, it is reasonable to assume he was the same man James Edward Austen-Leigh, then residing in Berkshire, enlisted for help with the frontispiece for the memoir of his aunt which he was then writing. According to the electoral registers of the time, James Andrews also lived until 1875 at the Sydenham Terrace address, which seems to have been in the Broadway district of the Parish of Bray, of which James Edward Austen-Leigh was then vicar. He could not have been too well off, for he appears in the electoral registers as one of the 'occupiers of rateable value of over £12 and less than £50 per annum', that is one of the new electorate given the vote by the Reform Act of 1870. He apparently either died or moved away from Maidenhead after 1875, as his name does not appear in subsequent electoral registers. In any event, he was elderly when he redrew Cassandra's sketch, for there is a record of his having painted a portrait of a cleric, the Rev. George Clayton, between 1825-30. Also, according to *The Directory of Victorian Painters* by Christopher Wood, James Andrews, a portrait painter, then living at Maidenhead, exhibited one picture at the Royal Academy in 1868.

George Holbert Tucker

Notes on Auction Sales 1982-83

No manuscripts or early editions of Jane Austen were sold by Sotheby's in the 1982-83 season; these notes report only relevant lots in the sale by Christie's of the contents of Godmersham Park, Kent, 6-9 June 1983 (together with lots from the same source sold later by Christie's in London).

Works of applied art in the sale included, Lot 847, a pair of decanters engraved by Laurence Whistler with views of the entrance front of Godmersham Park and of the Temple in the park (the former was illustrated in the Jane Austen Society's Report for 1969, p. 13); the two decanters sold for £4,536 (all prices being the aggregate of the final bid with the premium of 8%). Lot 848 was a large goblet also engraved with a view of Godmersham Park by Laurence Whistler from a design by his brother Rex Whistler; this sold for £2,160. Among drawings sold, Lot 1130 was catalogued as a portrait of Jane Austen, full length, in white dress, seated writing at a table, pencil and watercolour, 11½ x 7½ in., English school, *circa* 1810 (the reproduction of this drawing in the catalogue suggests a much later dating). Lot 1131, not illustrated, was also catalogued as a portrait of Jane Austen, full length, in white dress, watercolour, 12 x 9½ in., English school, *circa* 1810; these two lots sold for £2,160 and £540 respectively. Lot 1132 was a medallion first day cover for the Jane Austen bicentenary, an envelope with coin and four stamps, sold for £10.

From the library of Godmersham House, Lots 2052-2066 comprised books by and about Jane Austen. Lots 2052, 2053, 2055, 2056 and 2057 formed a set of first editions of the novels uniformly bound in green straight-grained morocco gilt, all lacking half-titles: Lot 2052, *Sense and Sensibility*, £1,404; 2053, *Pride and Prejudice*, £1,944; 2055, *Mansfield Park*, £810; 2056, *Emma*, £1026; 2057, *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion*, £702. Lot 2054 was another first edition of *Pride and Prejudice*, modern half calf, also lacking half-titles, £864. Lot 2058 was a collection of nine of the separate editions of the minor works and juvenilia, the handmade paper issues, £216. Lot 2059 was a set of Bentley editions of the novels, 1886-1892, including the *Memoir*, 6 vols., £302. Lots 2060 and 2061 were two sets of the handmade paper issue of the 1892 Dent edition of the novels, each in 10 vols., original buckram, £172 and £118 respectively. Lot 2062 was a set of the Winchester edition of the novels, 10 vols., 1898, apparently rebound in half morocco, £648. Lot 2063 was a set of the original Oxford edition of the novels, 5 vols., 1923, sold with another edition not fully described, 6 vols., 1882, probably the Steventon edition, £194. Lot 2064 was a set of the 1933 printing of the Oxford edition, rebound, with twelve other books, £237. Lot 2065 was a set of the 1975 reissue of the Folio Society edition of Jane Austen, 7 vols., £129. Lot 2066 was a collection of about 65 volumes, mostly critical or biographical studies, £410.

Christie's sale in London on 22 June 1983 included seven further early editions of Jane Austen from Mrs Tritton's collection at Godmersham. Lot 46 was a first edition of *Emma* lacking only the half-title to Vol. 1, contemporary half red morocco, £1,296. Lot 47 was a first edition of *Mansfield Park* with all half-titles and the advertisement leaf, contemporary half calf rebaked, £1,026. Lot 48 was a first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion*, with half-titles, contemporary half blue calf, £756, and Lot 49 another copy of the same, contemporary half morocco, £702. Lot 49A was a first edition of *Pride and Prejudice*, with half-titles, three leaves in Vol. 3 from another copy, contemporary half roan, £1,188. Lot 50 was a first edition of *Sense and Sensibility*, with half-titles, polished calf by Sangorski, £1,296, and Lot 51 was a second edition of the same, with half-titles, contemporary half morocco, £432.

Lot 341 of Christie's sale in London on 20 July 1983 comprised an autograph manuscript of Jane Austen from Godmersham, a variant of the 'Lines on Maria Beckford' of which another manuscript is in the Winchester City Museum (*Minor works*, edited by R.W. Chapman, pp. 448/449), four four-line stanzas, reproduced (enlarged) in the sale catalogue, a single leaf of paper 125 x 102 mm, having on the reverse eleven lines of verse in the hand of Jane Austen's sister Cassandra; this sold for £6,480. Lot 343 in the same sale was the autograph manuscript, 25 leaves, of William Somerset Maugham's essay 'Jane Austen and *Pride and Prejudice*'. This essay (most accessible in Maugham's *Ten novels and their authors* 1954) was written while the author was staying with Mrs Tritton at Godmersham; the manuscript sold for £3,240.

David Gilson

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David Gilson

JANE AUSTEN AND THE THEATRE

Betty Askwith

Jane Austen was a coolly critical rather than an impassioned playgoer. Nevertheless she was quite knowledgeable about the theatre. When she stayed in London with her brother Henry she went to a number of plays and she wrote to Cassandra to tell her what she had seen, alluding to the actors as if she were quite familiar with their range and repertoire.

This is not surprising for at the beginning of the 19th century the theatre occupied a large place in most people's lives, a place which nowadays has been partially taken by the television, the cinema and even to some extent by the football terraces; for the theatre was by no means exclusive. Everybody went: the aristocracy and gentry in the boxes; the tradesmen, the middle classes and the less affluent in the pit, and the roughs in the gallery. There were always two pieces given, generally a tragedy and a comedy or farce, and after the interval you could if there was room get in for half-price. The custom of allowing footmen, who had attended their employers, a free seat in the gallery had led to so much

rioting and brawling, that it had been abolished in 1780, but there were still many disturbances from simple souls who would today be yelling for Arsenal or Manchester United. The most famous of these was the Old Prices riots of 1809, when Kemble in order to finance his newly built Covent Garden, put up the seats in the boxes from 6 to 7 shillings, and the pit from 3/6 to 4/-. These O P demonstrations went on for 63 nights and became an absolute Saturnalia, but though they were the longest lasting of all theatrical disturbances, they were not the most violent.

In 1773, in Garrick's day, the disorder was such that Garrick's friends hired a body of professional bruisers who waded into the pit, cracking skulls right and left, till they had established tranquillity. This retaliatory measure may seem a trifle harsh, but we must remember that the pit and gallery, whose patriotic souls were wounded by Garrick having introduced a ballet called the Chinese Festival, brought it on themselves. According to John Doran, a highly enjoyable Victorian theatrical historian, they had behaved "with accustomed Vandalism. They broke up benches, tore down hangings, smashed mirrors, cracked the harpischords (always the first to go) and finally charging onto the stage, slashed and cut the scenery in all directions."

It may seem strange that, with the possibility of encountering scenes like these, the upper classes were not deterred from visiting the theatre. Garrick, however, Sheridan and above all Kemble had so improved the general standard of acting and presentation that the seal not only of respectability but of fashion had been stamped on performances. There is a slightly malicious account written by Harriet Cavendish to her sister in 1808, of a conversation between her aunt, Lady Bessborough, her future stepmother, Lady Elizabeth Foster (both of whom Harriet disliked) and John Kemble, then starring in Pizarro, Sheridan's somewhat fusty tragedy. It goes as follows:

- Lady Liz After all I don't see why we should go into the nasty country. I shall envy all those dear good quizzzy people who stay for dear Pizzaro.
- Lady B. (in a titter) One wishes one could contrive to hear you notwithstanding the distance. I always think of Prince Jolie who had a magical pipe contrived.
- Kemble Well Ladies, when you reappear, the atmosphere till then clouded and dark will resume its wonted splendour and Rolla, your grateful Rolla, will assume again the animation of which your absence will have deprived him.

"This", concluded Harriet, "is the sort of conversation which passes between the trio and it is very comical."

Kemble may have courted the suffrage of the aristocracy, but it was perhaps the opinion of the pit which mattered most. When his wife asked Kean, after his first performance as Richard III, whether the Earl of Essex had been satisfied, Kean replied: "Damn the Earl of Essex! *the pit*

rose at me!" Cognoscenti used to push their way as near to the stage as possible to examine the expressions on the actors' faces or to applaud a new interpretation. Spontaneous applause would ring out, much as cricket fans might clap a fine cut to square leg. It seems from a contemporary account that players managed to pack as much feeling into a comparatively simple phrase as Lord Burleigh did into his famous nod. Spranger Barry, for instance, playing the name part in Garrick's "The Earl of Essex", on seeing the Countess of Rutland dead at his feet exclaimed: "'Oh look there!' " with such pathos of voice and attitude that all the critics in the pit burst into tears and then shook the theatre with repeated and unbounded applause. But this was London and one might assume in an age when communications were scanty and bad that such theatrical delights were reserved for inhabitants of the metropolis. This was not so. Most sizeable towns had their theatres and stock companies which were visited by the big stars when the London theatres were shut. It is true that the agricultural poor, unlike the London roughs, probably never did see anything but the Christmas mummers, but most literate people were in reach of some kind of theatrical performance, either in their vicinity or on a visit to Tunbridge Wells or Bath, and the vicar's daughter at Steventon was no exception.

She was indoctrinated early, for not only was she a frequent visitor to Bath, but the Austen family had succumbed to one of the prevailing crazes of the time, that of private theatricals. They gave regular performances, in the barn in summer, in the drawing-room in winter, but the Christmas of 1787 was especially marked out, for they were joined by their sparkling first cousin, Eliza de Feuillide. Eliza, the daughter of Mr Austen's sister, had married a member of the old French aristocracy, the Comte de Feuillide. She was a pretty flirtatious girl and life in pre-Revolutionary Paris suited her to a T. She enjoyed, as she told her less sophisticated English cousins, "being sure of my husband's affections, mistress of an easy fortune with the prospect of an ample one, advantages of rank and title and a numerous and brilliant acquaintance." Very nice too!

Eliza and her mother visited England in 1787 to see their relations and to take the waters at Tunbridge Wells. There Eliza was much taken with a play by Mrs Cowley called "Which Is The Man?" and determined to have it played during the Christmas festivities at Steventon, with herself in the part of Lady Bell Bloomer. One can see the attraction the piece must have had for her by the following extracts. Here Lady Bell is describing her entry to the Court of St James':

I ascend the stairs – move slowly through the rooms – incommode my bouquet – stay to adjust it, that the little gentry may have time to affix their admiration – again move on – enter the drawing room – throw a flying glance round the circle and see nothing but spite in the eyes of the women and a thousand nameless things in those of the men

The following dialogue is even more à propos:

- Lady Bell Why were you not at Court today?
Clarinda I had a teasing headache so pray tell me what happened there.
Lady Bell Oh the ladies as usual brilliant, nothing so flat as the men. They make themselves members of clubs in the way of business and members of Parliament in the way of amusement, all their passions are reserved for the first and all their wit for the last.
Clarinda 'Tis better in Paris?
Lady Bell Oh 'tis quite another thing. Devoted to eloquence they catch their opinions, their wit and their bon mots from the mouths of the ladies.

Eliza certainly intended to act a part in which she would have shone, for another cousin, Philadelphia Walter wrote on September 19th 1787: "They (Eliza and her mother) go at Xmas to Steventon to act a play "Which is the Man?" ... My uncle's barn is fitting up quite like a theatre, & all the young folks are to take part". The theatricals duly took place but we cannot be sure that "Which is the Man?" was the play chosen. Austen Leigh's biography says that they acted "The Wonder", for which James Austen wrote a prologue. Perhaps in the end "Which is the Man?" was considered too strong for a clergyman's household, even one as tolerant The Rev. George Austen's. Speeches like Lord Sparkler's: "I address Lady Bell for a wife because she's the fashion and I address Julia for a mistress because 'tis the fashion to have mistresses from higher orders than sempstresses and mantuamakers" – may have caused someone to exclaim, as Edmund did in *Mansfield Park* – that such a play is "exceedingly unfit for private representation."

If such a substitution were made it was was a poor one. "The Wonder or a Woman Keeps a Secret" is a fusty old piece by Mrs Centlivre, first produced in 1714. It is set in Portugal, which gives opportunity for some fine patriotic speeches about how much better life is in the Land of the Free. "My Lord, the English are by nature what the ancient Romans were by discipline; courageous, bold, hardy, and in love with liberty. Liberty is the idol of the English under whose banner all the nation enlists. Give but the word for Liberty and straight more armed legions would appear than France and Philip keep in constant pay." One can almost hear the roars of applause from pit and gallery!

At Steventon the rôle of the hero, Don Felix, would have been taken by Henry Austen playing opposite to Eliza's Violante. The part is not nearly such a good one as Lady Bell but there are moments which the leading actors must have enjoyed. After a quarrel, based on a misunderstanding, Don Felix says:

- Don Felix Give me your hand at parting Violante, won't you? (He lays his hand upon her knee several times.) Won't you? – won't you? – won't you?

Violante (Half regarding him) Won't I do what?
 Don Felix You know what I would have Violante. Oh! my heart!
 Violante (Smiles) I thought my chains were easily broken (lays her hand in his).
 Don Felix (Draws his chair close to her and kisses her hand in a rapture) Too well thou knowest thy strength. Oh, my charming angel my heart is all thy own! Forgive my hasty passion, 'tis the transport of a love sincere. Oh! Violante, Violante!

Jane, a sharp-eyed child of twelve may well have gathered some hints for Henry Crawford and Maria Bertram.

Twenty-four years later Jane was staying in Sloane Street with Eliza, now her sister-in-law. (The Comte de Feuillide had been guillotined in 1794 and his widow had married Henry Austen three years later.) Mansfield Park was already begun and many memories of the Steventon theatricals must have been awakened to find their way into the novel. It is not germane to my subject to enquire why this book is darker in hue than the other novels. There are plenty of reasons in Jane's private life which may account for it. Moreover, like all other artists, novelists sometimes want to broaden their scope, and it is interesting to note that Mansfield Park is a distinct step towards the future, towards the coming zeitgeist. A docile heroine, approval of parental supremacy, disapproval of a play which turns on the plight of an unmarried mother, all savour more of Charlotte M. Yonge than of Aphra Behn. It does seem strange however that Jane Austen, who at fourteen had started "Love & Freindship" with the light-hearted statement: "My Mother was the natural daughter of a Scotch peer by an Italian opera girl", should have identified herself with Fanny Price's rather priggish attitude to private theatricals and "Lovers' Vows" in particular.

I must admit that on rereading "Lovers' Vows" I was struck by its harmlessness. I had vaguely thought there was a whiff of incest about it, but whatever the actors may have introduced there is no justification in the text. The play is a rather tedious affair, written by Kotzebue, translated and probably enlivened by Mrs Inchbald. Like most 18th century dramas it plunges at once in *media res*. Agatha, starving and destitute, is thrown out of the village inn because she cannot pay her bill. She is succoured by a young soldier who turns out to be her son. (Not quite such an improbable coincidence as it might seem since he has returned to his native village to get a copy of his birth certificate, without which he cannot rise in the army or achieve anything elsewhere. A realistic touch of German bureaucracy.) But he cannot get a certificate because, Agatha explains to him, he is a natural son. She was seduced in early youth by the owner of the neighbouring castle, Baron Wildenheim, who then deserted her, went away to the wars, married an heiress and went to live on his wife's estates. Frederick is of course horrified to learn all this and to find his mother so ill, and there are various stage directions such as: "Agatha rises and embraces him — Frederick leans his head

against her breast — Frederick embraces her — Agatha presses him to her breast"; which, one supposes, led Mary Crawford to say to Mr Rushworth: "We shall have an excellent Agatha, there is something so *maternal* in her manner, so completely *maternal* in her voice and countenance!"

It is little wonder that Henry and Maria spent so much time rehearsing this scene for it is the only one they have together. It ends with Frederick depositing his mother with a cottager and his wife. (The part that Mrs Grant so obligingly took over from Fanny.) Frederick then goes off to beg for help and gets into trouble for assaulting his unrecognized father. It would be tedious to go through the whole plot of "Lovers' Vows", but it is amusing to read it in conjunction with *Mansfield Park* and imagine the various actors in their roles. Tom Bertram must have been a tremendous bore as the old butler who, for some arcane reason, can only deliver messages and information in doggerel verse; Mr Rushworth was of course hopeless as Count Cassel but the foppish, fashionable dandy is not a bad little part, and any professional actor would choose it in preference to Anhalt who is a complete stick — a suitable role for Edmund! Anhalt is tutor to Baron Wildenheim's daughter, Amelia, and is commissioned by her father, who wishes her to marry Count Cassel, to ascertain her views. He begins his task by painting at great length a rosy picture of married life ending thus:

Anhalt Hand in hand they pass on from morning to evening
 through their summer's day till the night of age draws on.

Amelia You may tell my father I'll marry.

Anhalt thereupon changes his tack, and tells her, still at considerable length, that:

When folly and ill humour forge the fetters of matrimony
they gall with their weight the married pair.

Amelia I will not marry.

Anhalt You mean to say you will not fall in love?

Amelia Oh no! I am in love.

Anhalt You are in love! (starting) and with the Count?

Amelia I wish I were.

Anhalt Why so?

Amelia Because he would perhaps love me again.

Anhalt (warmly) Who is there that would not?

Amelia Would you?

It is this scene that Edmund and Mary must have rehearsed in Fanny's schoolroom, and it is little wonder that it was gall and wormwood to her, but Jane Austen seems to be speaking with her own voice when she describes Fanny's first reaction to the play. "Agatha and Amelia appeared to her in their different ways so totally improper for home representation, the language of the one and the situation of the other, so unfit to be expressed by any woman of modesty, that she could

hardly suppose her cousins could be aware of what they were engaging in." It would be interesting to know if Jane Austen ever read a professional criticism of "Lovers' Vows", which appeared in the *Examiner*, October 8th 1813. Hazlitt wrote: "'Lovers Vows" has been brought forward at Drury Lane and a young woman of the name of Mardyn has appeared as Amelia Wildenheim The whole of this play, which is of German origin, carries the romantic in sentiment and story to the extreme verge of decency as well as probability. The character of Amelia Wildenheim is its particular charm. The open undisguised simplicity of this character is, however, so enthusiastically extravagant to excite some little surprise and incredulity on the English stage. The portrait is too naked but it is the nakedness of innocence. She lets us see the bottom of her heart but there is nothing there that she need to disguise. Mrs. Mardyn did the part very delightfully, with great spirit and feeling, but her movements were at times too youthful and unrestrained and too much like waltzing ... Some of the situations in this popular play (let the critics say what they will of their extravagance) are very affecting and we will venture the opinion that more tears were shed than there would have been at Hamlet, Othello, Lear and Macbeth, for a whole season. This is not the fault of Shakespeare but neither is it the fault of Kotzebue.'

Jane Austen's playgoing in her early years was not confined to private theatricals. She was a frequent visitor to Bath, even before she came there to live, and must often have gone to the play, probably becoming enough of a regular theatre-goer to bring a calm acceptance to all that she was to see later in London. At the turn of the century the little theatre in Orchard Street, though far too small, was a touring date for most of the London stars. The chief glory of its resident company, Mrs Siddons, had gone to Drury Lane in 1782, but she frequently visited Bath, as did Kemble, Cooke and Elliston. Altogether the theatre was an integral part of Bath life; almost as necessary to the cure as the waters, the concerts and the Assembly Rooms. A weekly programme for visitors lists balls on Mondays and Thursdays, the Assembly Rooms on Tuesdays and Fridays and the theatre on Saturdays. Jane, writing to Cassandra from Bath on June 19th 1799, says: "The Play on Saturday is *I hope* to conclude our gaities here", and she obviously takes going to the theatre as a natural part of her visit. Unfortunately she does not mention what she saw; it may well have been Mrs Siddons who was in Bath that year and evoked so much enthusiasm at her last performance of the season that many people who had bought tickets could not get in and inside the uproar was so great that the actors could not make themselves heard. Mrs Siddons returned in 1801 and Jane probably saw her at one time or another, for in 1811, during a visit to London she wrote: "I have no idea of seeing Mrs Siddons. She *did* act on Monday, but as Henry was told by the Boxkeeper that he did not think she would, the places were given up. I should particularly have liked to see her in Constance, and could swear at her with little effort for disappointing me." This rather sounds as if she had seen Mrs Siddons in other roles; Constance was among the most famous and most popular of her later parts, but Jane need not have been

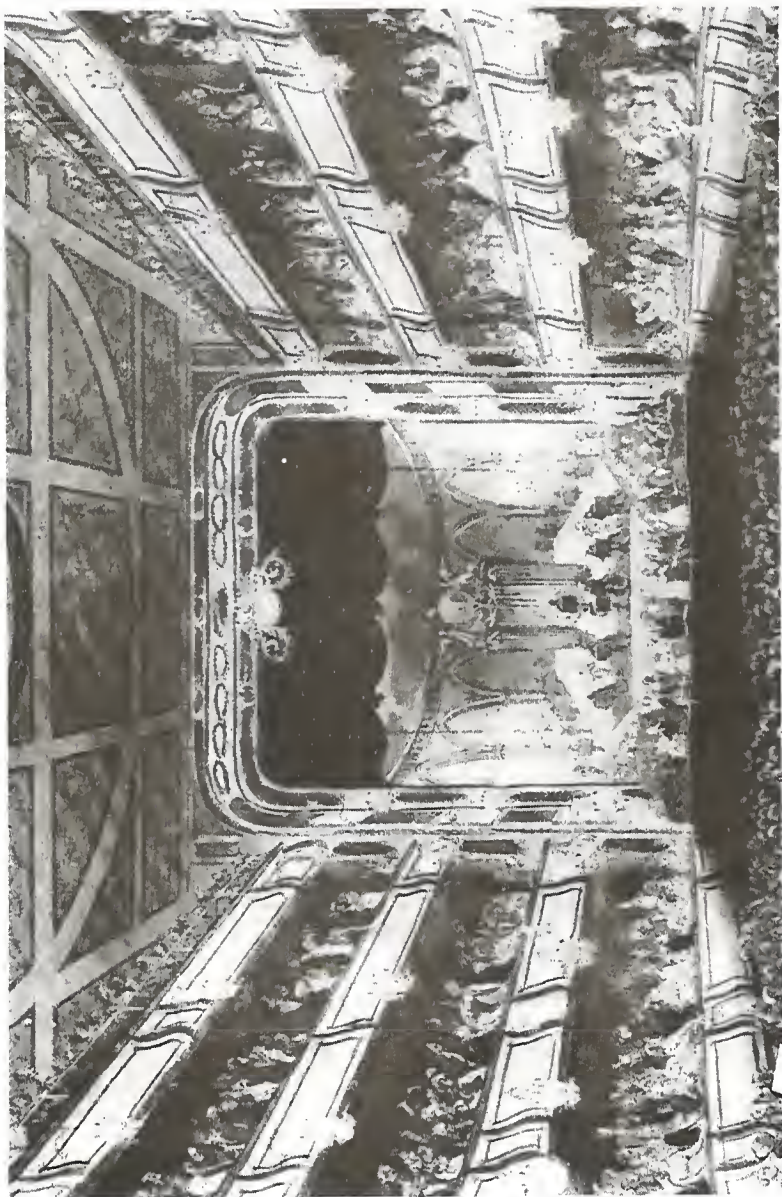
so vexed at missing her, for Thomas Lawrence opined in that same year that she ought to retire as Lady Constance in *King John* as her voice failed at one point and Kemble agreed that she had no longer the power to express the passage properly. But if Jane Austen missed seeing the great falling star of the theatre she was to witness the rising of the new sun; for on March 5th 1814 she attended the eighth performance given by Edmund Kean in the part of Shylock.

However before discussing Kean and Jane Austen's reactions to him we should perhaps glance at the general state of the theatre of that time. The two main houses were, of course, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, who had held their patents since the time of Charles II and were the only two theatres licensed to produce serious drama. The Haymarket had a kind of half licence, allowing it to produce plays in the summer when the two big theatres were shut, and there were various small theatres, very much on the fringe, who avoided the licensing laws by billing a concert and performing a play in the interval. Goodman's Fields, where Garrick made his debut, was one of these. In addition there were large stages, such as Astley's and the Lyceum, which presented grandiose spectacles. Astley's specialised in equestrian events, which was only natural since it had been founded by a sergeant-major who had been a breaker-in to General Elliot's Light Horse, but it also provided pageants such as "The Battle of Waterloo" and "The Burning of Moscow." It will be remembered that John and Isabella Knightley took their children plus Harriet Smith and Robert Martin to Astley's, where they were all "exceedingly amused". The Lyceum specialised in ballad operas, musical farces and melodrama, though it must on occasions have slipped in a straight play, for in April 1811 Jane saw there "The Hypocrite", which was founded on Molière's "Tartuffe"; possibly they disguised it as a musical with the addition of songs and ballads.

There was of course great emulation and rivalry between the two principal theatres. If one of them staged a success the other immediately put on the same play with its own star. Thus if Mrs Siddons played Zara in "The Mourning Bride" at Drury Lane, Covent Garden attempted to counter it, however unavailingly, with Miss Younge in the same part. Richard III, then almost the most popular Shakespeare play, followed one another, as Kemble pitted himself first against Cooke and then against Kean. A ribald 18th-century doggerel goes:

*Why what's tonight cried angry Ned
As up from bed he rouses
Romeo again! He shakes his head:
"A plague on both their Houses."*

It might almost have seemed an extension of his rivalry that when Covent Garden burned down in September 1808, Drury Lane immediately followed suit in the Spring of 1809; the occasion that gave rise to Sheridan's bon mot as he stood watching the conflagration from a neighbouring tavern: "Why, cannot a man take a glass of wine at his own fireside?" Both theatres were rebuilt with remarkable celerity and both



Covent Garden Opera House, from Ackermann's Repository, 1808

very much enlarged. It was these new large-scale buildings that Jane Austen visited when she began her London theatre-going in 1811. Much was lost in the rebuilding. The sense of intimacy and closeness to the actors was gone. The critics would no longer be able to comment on facial expressions. Moreover the patrons in the galleries were almost deprived of sight and hearing. The O P riots were not only due to the rise in prices. To help pay for his new theatre Kemble had much increased the number of private boxes with their separate entrances and had squeezed the gallery up to the skies. Hazlitt wrote: "At the great theatres it is sometimes very difficult to hear for the noise and quarrelling in the gallery. The gods (as they are called at Drury Lane and Covent Garden) we suspect 'keep such a dreadful pudden o'er our heads' for their impatience at not being able to hear what is passing below; and at the minor theatres are the most quiet and attentive of the audience."

What other changes besides the rowdiness of the audience should we have seen had we accompanied Jane Austen to the theatre in 1811? The scenery still mostly consisted of flats, wheeled in from the wings or dropped from the ceiling, though these were to a certain extent modified by the work of P.J. de Loutherburg and Willian Capon. The former, who worked at Drury Lane, introduced a system of using silk screens working on pivots before concentrated light in the wings, which produced a magical effect; while the latter studied period drawings and furnished Kemble with backgrounds of painstaking architectural accuracy. The lighting at the beginning of the 19th century was still entirely provided by candles and oil lamps (the Olympic was in 1817 the first theatre to have its stage lit by gas). Up to the middle of the 18th century both house and stage at Drury Lane were lit by chandeliers; a great central one over the middle of the auditorium and six more hanging over the stage, each one containing twelve wax candles in brass sockets. It was Garrick who, in 1765, introduced foot-lights or floats and Covent Garden was soon similarly improved though Drury Lane had the advantage, for instead of wax candles the Garden had oil lamps which smelt and gave a dim rather disagreeable light. The Drury Lane lighting must in fact have been extremely beautiful. The Annual Register of 1765 describes lights coming from behind the scenes which cast a reflection forwards exactly resembling sunshine; and there is an engraving of the screen scene from the "School for Scandal" which shows brilliant lighting from the footlights well masked from the pit, with direct lighting from the prompt side falling on a considerable area of the main stage but leaving the O P side where the screen stood in semi-shadow. The effect of the warm candlelight must have been enchanting but no doubt it had its drawbacks. The heat in a crowded theatre on a warm evening must have been stifling and no wonder the theatres so often burnt down!

What other things would have struck the traveller in time accompanying Henry and Jane Austen to the boxes in 1811? Victorian critics were horrified by the strange medley of costumes worn by their predecessors. They deplored Hamlet in a powdered wig with the order of the Garter

beneath his knee or Hippolytus attired in a jaunty silk jacket and tight half-boots. Even as early as 1765 there was criticism on this score. The exhibition at Burlington House featuring the history of Covent Garden showed a picture by William Dawes entitled "The Downfall of the Modern Stage". It depicts a lady in a wide panniered dress and a gentleman in a short-waisted coat with a wig twisted up into spikes, forming a sort of silver candelabra. Shakespeare is lying, felled to the ground at their feet. A century later Dr Doran pokes gentle fun at one of the witches in Macbeth wearing "a killing fancy hat, her hair superbly powdered, rouge laid on with deliberate effect and her whole exquisite person enveloped in a cloud of point lace and fine linen". Subject as we are today to the whims of trendy young producers who would probably find such effects delightful, we might be able to bear them with equanimity, but we should be shocked by the bursts of applause that, as we have noted, frequently punctuated the actors' speeches and we should have deplored the star system which lasted well into the 19th century. In 1811 there was little, if any, notion of team work. The leading players marched into the limelight and remained there, taking care that no lesser mortals infringed their rights. This was particularly so when they went on tour and descended upon the provincial theatres, playing their celebrated roles, supported by the local stock company. Frequently there were no rehearsals and all the minor players had to do was to know their cues and keep out of the way. Eliza O'Neill, who had been Covent Garden's great find as Juliet in 1814, came down to Plymouth in 1816 to play Belvidera in "Venice Preserved". When Countess Morley ventured to remark to her that Mr Wood, the local leading man, had given a very respectable performance as Jaffeir, Miss O'Neill simply replied: "Mr Who? I really was not aware of his name."

Having attained such an eminence the stars were naturally loth to relinquish it, and another feature that might jar on a modern audience was that neither age, obesity nor temporary disability persuaded them to give up their parts. There is a charming anecdote of Mrs. Pritchard, one of Garrick's leading ladies. The company was assembled to read the run through of a new play in which the chief female role was that of a girl of sixteen. As Mrs Pritchard was well over fifty at the time, someone with great deference suggested that it might be more realistic to make the heroine twenty-three. Mrs Pritchard beamed at her interlocutor through her spectacles and said gently: "I think you will find it all right in the theatre", and sixteen the heroine remained. Audiences of the day seemed to take no exception to these arrangements. Mrs Siddons played Rosalind when she was six months pregnant and Mrs Jordan continued in breeches parts long after she was fat and forty. It was perhaps this clinging to well-worn star roles which prevented minor players from showing their paces and kept Kean so long in the provinces.

I expect most people here know all about Kean's debut but I cannot resist dwelling on it for a moment for it is one of the great fairy stories of the theatre. Sheridan had practically ruined Drury Lane, treating its finances as his own private cash-box and paying neither actors nor staff.



Miss Eliza O'Neill

After the fire of 1809 he was forced out and the rebuilt theatre was taken over by a committee of gentlemen headed by Samuel Whitbread and including Lord Byron. The losses however still continued and no expedient could be found to put the theatre into profit till, scraping the barrel, they invited an obscure provincial player to play at least one Shakesperian role. Kean was at this time destitute and nearly starving. He and his wife were touring the country as strolling players, not even attached to a stock company. Their eldest son, a promising child, died, probably of cold and malnutrition. Kean, who not unnaturally had a chip on his shoulder as large as a log, felt himself neglected, despised and metaphorically, if not actually spat on. It is no wonder that he chose Shylock as his opening role. On the 25th of January 1814 he walked to Drury Lane and laid out his make-up (a black wig instead of the conventional red one) in the green room (he had refused the star dressing room). His fellow actors were completely indifferent to him, at rehearsal he had gone through his part in a low mumble, they expected nothing of him. The night was wet and stormy and the house was thin but there were a few aficionados, including Byron's old housemaster at Harrow, Doctor Drury. Shylock's first line is: "A thousand ducats. Well", and Doctor Drury was later to relate "As soon as I heard that 'Well', I exclaimed 'He is safe!' By the end of the second act the house had filled up a little. A new opera, "The Farmer's Wife" which should have opened at Covent Garden had been postponed and some of the disappointed audience had drifted across to Drury Lane. Raymond Fitzsimmons in his life of Kean describes what followed. "They (the audience) were in time to hear Kean in Act III in the famous speech which begins by cataloguing all the wrongs that Antonio had done him. He hurried through these, accentuating each one in a high pitched voice but when he reached the climax 'and what is his reason?' he came down by a sudden turn to a gentle suffering tone: 'I am a Jew'. He concluded with the well known passionate recrimination: 'If you prick us do we not bleed?' and the audience were on their feet greeting each savage interrogation with roars of approval. The players in the green room were startled by the din. They rushed into the wings to see Shylock raging like a lion in the dialogue with Tubal. The audience was still shouting its applause and William Oxberry who played Lancelot Gobbo wrote: 'How the devil so few of them kicked up such a row is marvellous!'

It was Hazlitt who stamped all this enthusiasm with the final and lasting seal of his approval. He was not entirely uncritical. He felt that Kean's Shylock was too variable, too little obsessed with the one idea of his wrongs, not enough bent on purposes of revenge. "The fault of his acting," Hazlitt wrote, "was (if we may hazard the objection) an over display of the resources of the art, which gave too much relief to the hard impenetrable, dark groundwork of the character of Shylock." Nevertheless he stood by his opening paragraph: "For voice, eye, action, and expression, no actor has come out for many years at all equal to him." And when he saw the play once more a week later he wrote: "For depth and force of conception, we have seen actors whom

we should prefer to Mr. Kean in Shylock; for brilliant and masterly execution, none."

Echoes of all this excitement penetrated as far as rural Kent. In early March 1814 Jane Austen was travelling up to London from Godmersham accompanied by her brother Edward and her favourite niece Fanny. She was to stay with Henry, now a widower, in Henrietta Street and she obviously expected a feast of theatre-going. "Places are secured at Drury Lane for Saturday", she wrote, "but so great is the rage of seeing Kean that only a 3rd or 4th row could be got; as it is in a front box however, I hope we shall do pretty well — Shylock, a good play for Fanny — she cannot be too much affected I think".

How much, if at all, Fanny Knight was affected by Kean's magnetic performance we shall never know, but it left her aunt in her usual state of calm rationality. "We were quite satisfied with Kean," she wrote, "but the part was too short and excepting him and Miss Smith, and *she* did not quite answer my expectation, the parts were ill filled and the Play heavy." (Hazlitt, incidentally, thought "the play very respectably cast" and gave a word of praise to Miss Smith's Portia.) More enthusiasm was expressed by Jane Austen in some later sentences in the same letter. "I shall like to see Kean again excessively and to see him with you too." (Henry was obviously trying to get tickets for Cassandra's coming visit but the house was practically sold out for a fortnight and the plan never materialised). "It appeared to me," Jane went on, "as if there were no fault in him anywhere; and in his scene with Tubal there was exquisite acting." Judicious, balanced and adequate praise. It is interesting to compare her criticism with that of another literary character who saw Kean a few years later. In December 1817 John Keats was acting as dramatic critic to "The Champion", and this is how he opened his article on Kean: "In our unimaginative days, Habeas Corpused as we are out of all wonder, curiosity and fear; — in these fireside, delicate, gilded days, these days of sickly safety and comfort" (this was how a young man viewed the climate of his own time two years after Waterloo and the long struggle of the Napoleonic wars) "we feel very grateful to Mr. Kean for giving us some excitement; by his wild passion in one of the old plays. He is a relict of romance, a posthumous ray of chivalry and always seems just arrived from the camp of Charlemagne." After some perceptive praise of Kean in Othello and Richard III Keats concludes with a purple passage, highly typical of the Romantics: "Kean, Kean! — have a carefulness of thy health, a nursing regard of thy own genius, a pity for those cold and enfeebling times: Cheer us a little in the failure of our days! for romance lives but in books, the goblin is driven from the hearth, and the rainbow is robbed of its mystery." It is not only the clash between two natures with little in common except their genius but it is the clash of generations. There were only twenty years between Jane Austen and John Keats but these twenty years marked the gulf between the 18th and 19th centuries.

One thing all theatre-goers of both centuries must have had in common was enormous stamina. "We were too tired," Jane Austen admitted, "after seeing 'The Merchant', 'to stay for the whole of 'Illusion' which

had three acts; there is a great deal of finery and dancing in it but I think little merit". Owing to their immense size and the need to recoup building costs both the larger houses were attempting to tickle the groundlings by moving away from the legitimate theatre and staging lavish musical displays. "Illusion" put on by Robert Elliston, was a typical example. The audience was promised: "Grand Entrance to Bushido's palace — Banquet Gallery — Temple of Tai Ro — Japanese Landscape — Japanese Blacking warehouse in London — Country Public House and Cricket Ground — Field of Battle after Action — Pillar of Victories — Tavern and Furriers' Shop — Empty House and Perfumery Warehouse — Temple of Discord and Magical allegorical Representation, the Hall of Harmony". It is small wonder that Jane Austen felt too exhausted to sit it out! She had scarcely time to recover before she was whisked off the very next evening to see "Artaxerxes", a musical featuring Miss Stephens, Covent Garden's newest star. Hazlitt was lyrical about her. "She becomes more and more a favourite of the public," he wrote. "Her singing is delicious, but admired as it is, it is not as it ought to be. Oh if she had been wafted to us from Italy! A voice more sweet, varied and flexible was perhaps never heard on the English stage." The unmusical Jane Austen however remained unimpressed. She confessed that she found "Artaxerxes" "tiresome", though she was highly amused by the farce that followed. This was "The Devil To Pay" and one wishes that she had said more about it, for it featured Mrs. Jordan, by then nearing the end of her career. The farce was followed by a pantomime and one can sympathise with Jane when an admirer of Fanny's, a Mr Plumptre, joined them and became very earnest in his desire to treat them to a box at Covent Garden, the very next night, to see Miss Stephens in "The Farmer's Wife". "I do not particularly wish him to succeed", Jane wrote temperately. However succeed he did and the next evening saw them all once more at Covent Garden.

"The Farmer's Wife" was the piece that had been postponed, allowing a part of its disappointed audience to cross over to Drury Lane and see Kean's first Shylock. It is a harmless little musical with all the usual stock situations; good-hearted country folk, a raffish town seducer, an impertinent valet, a threatened abduction. Fanny and Mr. Plumptre were delighted with Miss Stephens but Fanny's aunt could not join in their raptures. "Her merit in singing is I daresay very great", Jane told Cassandra, "that she gave me no pleasure is no reflection upon her, nor I hope upon myself, being what Nature made me on that article. All that I am sensible of in Miss S. is a pleasing person and no skill in acting. We had Mathews, Liston and Emery;" the description concludes, "of course some amusement". If Jane Austen had not been tired I daresay she would have been more enthusiastic for Mathews, Liston and Emery were the three great comedians of the day. It was rather like having Bernard Miles, Mike Yarwood and Ronnie Barker on the same bill. Emery would surely have been allotted the role of Robin, a true Bernard Miles part. Hazlitt wrote that: "Emery's

representations of common rustic life have an absolute identity with the thing represented;" and we can imagine him getting the best out of a speech such as the following:

Whew! yonder goes my Susan; but shoo be a queer grained toad; and though I be a likely lad, and ha' gotten t' brass in my service, Shoo grins at me lik an' I were no' but a moudiwarp.

We cannot tell whether Mathews or Lister took the part of Doctor Pooter. Possibly Mathews since he was a noted mimic. (it was said of Kean, as a measure of the highest praise, that when he was alone with his friends he was almost as good a mimic as Mathews) and one of Doctor Pooter's main scenes shows him addressing a Philological meeting, and imitating all the different voices which interrupted him. It may however have been Liston who was also a noted comic. He was a small man with a round face and a pert upturned nose, but he fancied himself in tragic roles choosing for his benefits Romeo, Octavian and – Baron Wildenheim! It was in comedy however that he shone and Hazlitt recorded that in an English version of "*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*" "no more perfect performance was ever witnessed." In any event whoever got the part had a superb opportunity. Doctor Pooter had an idiosyncratic way of expressing himself:

Went last summer to a watering place, all in the way of my profession – sent for in a hurry – lady of fashion – feel pulse – faux pas – not the lady sick but her lap dog – double fee – look grave – talk Latin – hint at hydrophobia – prescribe galvanism – apply battery – shock – out springs Pompcy plump into a batter pudding going to the bakehouse and lay like a toad in the hole. Ha, ha, ha!

Dickens was a friend of Charles Dibdin Junior who wrote "The Farmer's Wife". Jane Austen alas! did not live long enough to know that she had been listening to the character who inspired Mr Alfred Jingle!

"The Farmer's Wife" marked the conclusion of Jane's theatre-going in the Spring of 1814; in November of the same year however she was once more in London and saw the last play she was ever to witness. This was "Isabella" by Southerne, rearranged by Garrick. Southerne's play was written in 1694 and owed a great deal to Shakespeare. It incorporated a heroine who kills herself, a gossiping nurse, and an Iago-like villain, who is finally unmasked but refuses to repent. It also includes two stock situations which formed the staple of many subsequent plays and novels. First the adamant grandfather who is willing to adopt the child on condition it is parted from its mother (compare "Vanity Fair" and "Little Lord Fauntleroy"). Second (more or less dating back to "The Odyssey") the husband who after having been lost for years in a P O W camp or its equivalent, returns to find his wife married to another man. With all these well-tried ingredients "Isabella" could hardly fail of being a success and it was in fact one of the great tearjerkers of the time.

It evoked passionate weeping not only from the audience but from the cast. Mrs Siddons regularly deluged her child (played originally by Henry Siddons) with hot tears. It was in "Isabella" that this great actress had conquered Drury Lane in 1782 and it had been one of her war-horses ever since. By 1814 however she was more or less retired and the part was played by Eliza O'Neill, fresh from her overwhelming success as Juliet. In spite of a disproportionately long nose and, in later years, a tendency to corpulence, she was universally acclaimed both as a beauty and an actress. "The Oxford Companion to the Theatre" says that: "on her debut she was looked on as a worthy successor to Mrs Siddons, with less nobility perhaps but greater sweetness and charm"; which explains Jane Austen's comment on her small niece, Charles Austen's daughter. "Cassy did not show more pleasure at seeing me than her sisters but I expected no better; – she does not shine in the tender feelings. She will never be a Miss O'Neill; – more in the Mrs Siddons Line."

The floods of tears that these fustian heroines, Belvidera, Monominia, Isabella, drew from contemporary audiences were not for Jane Austen. I can do no better I think than conclude with a quotation from her own letters which succinctly sums up her attitude towards the theatre. "November 29th 1814. We were all at the play last night to see Miss O'Neill in "Isabella". I do not think she was quite equal to my expectations. I fancy I want something more than can be. Acting seldom satisfies me. I took two Pocket Handkerchiefs, but had very little occasion for either. She is an elegant creature however and hugs Mr. Younge delightfully".

Another Emma

On 16 September 1828 Miss Emma Smith of Tring Park in Hertfordshire recorded in her diary: "This day proved one of the most important in my life. We read *Emma* in the morning. After luncheon ... we all walked towards the woods at Terrets and during the walk I was engaged to marry Mr Austen. On our return home Mamma was spoken to and most kindly gave her consent. I afterwards walked with him in the shrubbery."

Her fiancée was the Reverend James Edward Austen, known in his family as Edward, the thirty-year-old son of Jane Austen's eldest brother James, who had died some nine years previously.

Emma had become acquainted with Edward at The Vyne, the Hampshire home of her aunt, Mrs Chute. The Chutes, in fact, were old friends of Edward's parents. Shortly after the marriage of James Austen and his second wife, Mary Lloyd, in January 1797, Mrs Chute had written to her sister Augusta: "This morning was absolutely devoted to

receiving company ... first Mr and Mrs James Austen, a bridal visit; she is perfectly unaffected, and very pleasant; I like her. Was it not for the small-pox which has scarred and seamed her face dreadfully, her countenance would be pleasing."

The recipient of this letter was to become the mother of Emma, and of five other daughters and three sons. Despite possessing a surname which would have called forth the scorn of Sir Walter Elliot, Emma Smith was well-born. Her father had been an M.P. with a house in Portland Place and another at Suttons in Essex. These properties were now occupied by her eldest brother, Sir Charles Smith, who had inherited a baronetcy through the maternal line – also Smiths. One of the family connections was Lady Northampton.

Congratulations flowed in from all sides. Edward's mother wrote, "Will it my dear Emma be incorrect if I congratulate *you*, in having engaged the affections of a man, who, as far as human nature will allow, is free from fault? It must I am sure be satisfactory to Mrs Smith and yourself to know that his conduct never caused me an uneasy moment, and that you will find him kind and affectionate I can have no doubt." His sister Caroline added, "Had I been able to choose I could have fixed on no one that I should consider so well suited to him as yourself, and if you knew how inexpressibly dear this Brother has always been to me, and how I have doted on him from my earliest childhood to the present time, you would feel that in speaking my approbation of your intended union I could not express myself in stronger terms."

From Mrs Chute came this tribute: "I was aware two years ago of the decided preference which he gave you. I must consider your marriage with him as in some degree under my auspices as it was in my house you first met He certainly is a very agreeable companion, cheerful, lively, animated, ready to converse, willing to read out loud, never in the way and just enough of poetry and romance to please me and yet not to overlook sober reason."

Especially pleased by the match was that snobbish and capricious old lady, Edward's great-aunt, Mrs Leigh Perrot – of whom Jane Austen had never a good word to say. Since the death of James, who had always been regarded as the childless Leigh Perrots' heir, Mrs. Leigh Perrot had been undecided whether to leave the property of Scarlets to Edward, or to another of Jane's brothers, Captain Francis Austen. The latter had been favoured when Edward displeased his great-aunt by taking holy orders against her wishes. But then Captain Austen had unwittingly offended her by taking as his second wife Miss Martha Lloyd, earlier in the year of 1828. As Edward wrote to Emma, "Marriage which has sunk my uncle has raised me in her favour. She says she is particularly gratified by the attention of Lady Northampton."

The name of Edward's fiancée seems to have prompted a general rereading of the eponymous novel within the family. Mrs Leigh Perrot



Emma
Wife of the Reverend James Edward Austen

wrote to him on 29 October, "I have been reading *Emma* a second time; but I still cannot like it so well as poor Jane's other novels. Excepting Mr Knightley and Jane Fairfax, I do not think any one of the characters *good*. Frank Churchill is quite insufferable. I believe *I* should not have married him, had I been Jane. Emma is a vain meddling woman. I am sick of Miss Bates. *Pride and Prejudice* is the novel for me. Your Emma is a very different character, or I am much mistaken."

It is curious that both her Christian name and surname should figure in the novel; like Mr Elton's tasteless charade, whose "soft eyes" and "ready wit" fit neither Emma Woodhouse nor Harriet Smith, Edward's fiancée was in name at least an amalgam of the two characters. And just as in the novel Emma sketched Harriet, so did the real Emma's sister, Augusta, sketch her – looking as demure, surely, as ever the fictional Miss Smith did.

Edward and Emma were married on Jane's birthday, 16 December 1828. Emma wrote in her diary, "We went to church at 10 o'clock, and Mr Fowle married Edward and me, for which I thank God." Edward wrote simply, "Wedding day, went with dear Emma to Suttons."

They made their first home at Tring Park, where there was sufficient space to provide them with private quarters. Edward resigned the curacy of Newtown in Berkshire and accepted that of Tring, with a stipend of £20 per annum. Luckily on each side there was a well-hooded aunt to help out: Mrs Leigh Perrot allowed them £600 a year, and Mrs Chute added a further hundred.

It was not until November 1836 that Mrs Leigh Perrot died, at the age of ninety-two. Her will was opened; she had indeed left Scarlets to Edward. This branch of the family was now obliged to change their name to Austen-Leigh, which they did for the cost of £150 on 4 February 1837 at the Herald's office.

Under Scarlets' roof the family reached its final tally of eight sons (one of whom died in infancy) and two daughters. But with so many boys to educate – they went to a variety of public schools – Edward found even his resources stretched. In 1853 he decided to accept the offer of the living of Bray – the best living in his bishop's gift, worth £500 per annum, with a large vicarage whose garden swept down to the river Thames. The decision to leave Scarlets was Edward's alone; Emma, who later confessed to her daughters that her own preference had been to stay, declined to influence him. Scarlets was first let, and then sold, to a Mr Littledale. Mrs Leigh Perrot would have been furious.

For the rest of his life Edward Austen-Leigh was the Vicar of Bray. He and Emma saw their large and talented family flourish in a variety of academic and clerical careers. And then at the age of sixty-six Edward, whose youthful attempts at novel-writing had been much praised by his

aunt Jane, wrote his first book, *Recollection of the Vine Hunt*, which was printed for private circulation.

His daughter Mary later wrote: "The ease and swiftness with which it had been written, showed that no powers of composition were lost, and possibly this may have encouraged him to undertake, a few years later, another work, for which a strong desire had at times been expressed by the family – a memoir of his aunt, Jane Austen. He had been accustomed to answer, when urged on the subject, that, as there was so little to tell, it appeared to him impossible to write anything that could be called a 'life'.

"At length, however – that is to say, early in 1869 – he agreed to put down what little there was to say. His interest grew as he wrote.... He went for a night to Hampshire, first visiting Deane, his birthplace, where he inspected the register, and then going to Steventon, one mile further on, the birthplace of his Aunt Jane, and the spot where she and he had in their respective generations grown up to womanhood and manhood.... The old rectory had been pulled down, and its successor, in which he spent one night with his cousin, the Rev. William Knight, had been rebuilt upon another site; but the landscape, the church, and the old manor house were still the same. 'Walked about Steventon grounds, old and new, by myself' is the entry in his diary. It was for him the last sight of that old and beloved early home, the picture of which he was about to paint on behalf of the lovers of Jane Austen.

"The memoir was begun on March 30, 1869, and was finished early in September. Mr Bentley, the publisher, brought it out on December 16." With the publication of this beautifully written book, interest in the life and work of Jane Austen revived. Edward enjoyed its success for a few years, dying in 1874, his wife Emma in 1876.

Maggie Lane

I am deeply grateful to Mr and Mrs L. Impey for permission to quote from the *Memoir of James Edward Austen-Leigh* by Mary Augusta Austen-Leigh and from the *Austen Papers*, and to reproduce the sketch of Emma Smith.

Maggie Lane is author of *Jane Austen's Family – Through Five Generations* to be published by Robert Hale Ltd. in July 1984, price £9.95. Chronologically narrated to show the development of the family against the changing social conditions of Georgian and Victorian times, the book weaves together many fascinating individual stories into a family saga covering the period 1700 to 1870. Quoting extensively from letters and diaries, it contains much fresh material, particularly about the fifty years following Jane's death.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the Year 1984



1st Class of Petty Officers
Midshipman.

Midshipman
(National Maritime Museum, Greenwich)

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

President

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(Countess of Huntingdon)

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Lord David Cecil, C.H.

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £3,
and a single payment of £25 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

The Jane Austen Society, Ivalls,
Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire.

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1984

Membership

There were 76 new members during the year, of whom 17 became Life Members, as did 6 old members. Membership now stands at 1649 individual members and 44 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £3 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in Sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by kind permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 21st July. It was attended by over 500 members and their guests. Miss Margaret Lane (Countess of Huntingdon), the President, presided for the first time. She asked that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting, having been printed in the Annual Report, be taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Annual Report. He told members that the Jane Austen Memorial Trust had offered Jane Austen's House to the National Trust, who, after lengthy consideration, had decided to turn down the offer.

This motion was seconded by Mrs. Derek Willan, and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr T.E. Baileff, presented the Accounts. The motion was seconded by Mr A.N. Moore, and carried. The President expressed the thanks of the Society to Mr Baileff.

The Rev. W.A.W. Jarvis proposed that Miss Margaret Lane (Countess of Huntingdon) be re-elected as President of the Society, Lord David Cecil as Vice-President, and Sir Hugh Smiley as Chairman. This was seconded by Mrs J. Freeman, and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the Committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by the President, who took as her subject 'The Insufferable Bad Manners of Mr Darcy'.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Colonel E.J.C. Spanton (a great grandson of Jane Austen's brother Francis), seconded by Miss K.E. Brown, and carried.

The President closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Edward Knight for lending Chawton House once more.

Annual General Meeting 1985

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by kind permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 20th July, when the Spcaker will be A. Walton Litz, Professor of English at Princeton University.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, 3 West Heath Drive, NW11 7QG.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of 'Jane Austen in Bath', by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Hon. Secretary.

Price: £1 (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-75

The second volume of Collected Reports is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £8.50 (post free).

Winchester Cathedral

Society members will be interested to learn of the establishment of Winchester Cathedral Trust. It has been set up with the task of raising funds for the renovation and repair of the fabric of the Cathedral and its associated buildings. It is estimated that £300,000 will be needed each year for the next five years or so.

In an introductory message the Dean says, 'The Cathedral has never been in greater use nor the cost of its ministry so great. The work of preservation and restoration can never end.'

Those who would like to know more about the Trust and how they can assist it are invited to make contact with The Trust Director, 5a The Close, Winchester, Hants.

Who is she?

A member of the Society, who had bought a root of mallow (*Lavatera*) at Jane Austen's House some years ago, was arranging some at her local flower group. A recently joined and obviously inexperienced member of the group asked what it was. She was told that it was mallow, and that it came from Jane Austen's garden. "Oh" said the new member, "I haven't met her yet. Who is she?"

Would that we all could.

Edward Austen's Burial Place

When visiting the Godmersham Parish Church some time ago, I noted on the north wall a memorial to Jane Austen's brother Edward. It reads:

'In the family vault beneath are deposited the remains of EDWARD KNIGHT of Godmersham Park in this parish, and of Chawton House in the County of Southampton, Esq^{re}, who departed this life Nov^r 19th, 1852, in the 86th year of his age.

Mr. Knight, whose paternal name was Austen, succeeded by will in 1794 to the estates of his cousin Thomas Knight, Esq^{re}, and on the death of his widow in 1812 assumed the arms and name of Knight.

In the same vault is buried ELIZABETH his wife, third daughter of Sir Brook Bridges of Goodnestone Park in this county Bart. She died Oct. 10th, 1808, in the 36th year of her age. They had issue eleven children, of whom the nine surviving have caused this monument to be erected to the memory of their beloved parents.'

Mary Corringham

HMS Elephant

Lord Macaulay in his essay on Southey's Colloquies says, 'Though in general we prefer Mr. Southey's poetry to his prose, we must make one exception. The *Life of Nelson* is, beyond all doubt, the most perfect and the most delightful of his works.'

When Robert Southey's *Life of Nelson* was published in 1813, Jane Austen wrote to her sister, 'I am tired of *Lives of Nelson*, being that I never read any – I will read this, however, if Frank is mentioned in it.' Had she read the book, she would not have found any mention of her brother Frank in it. (But her novelist's antennae might have quivered at learning how Nelson's favourite sister Anne died 'in consequence of getting out of the ballroom at Bath, when heated with dancing'.)

At the time Southey's *Nelson* appeared, Jane Austen was busy with *Mansfield Park*. In a letter from Chawton dated July 3, 1813, addressed to 'Captⁿ Austen, HMS Elephant, Baltic', she told Frank, 'I have something in hand which I hope on the credit of P&P will sell

well, tho' not half so entertaining. And by the bye – shall you object to my mentioning the *Elephant* in it, and two or three other of your old ships? I *have* done it, but it shall not stay to make you angry.'

Obviously he did not object, for some of Frank's 'old ships' are mentioned in Chapter 38 of the new novel, which describes Fanny Price's return to her parents' home at Portsmouth, accompanied by her sailor brother William. They include the *Thrush*, in which William was to embark, the *Canopus*, *Elephant*, *Texel*, *Endymion*, and *Cleopatra*. Captain Price told his son, 'Captain Walsh thinks you will certainly have a cruise to the westward, with the *Elephant*. By G—, I hope you may.'

Southey devotes several pages to the exploits of the *Elephant*. At the battle of Copenhagen on April 2, 1801, Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, when appointed to lead the van, 'shifted his flag' to the *Elephant*, a lighter ship than his own *St. George*, and therefore fitter for the expected operations. It was aboard the *Elephant* that one of naval history's most memorable incidents occurred. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hyde Parker, beginning to despair of success, sent out a signal to discontinue the action.

Nelson, on the deck of *Elephant*, put the telescope to his blind eye, declared that he did not see the Commander's signal, damned the signal, and ordered that his own signal for closer battle should be nailed to the mast.

In Jane Austen's time boys entered the navy very early. Nelson was entered as a midshipman at the age of 12 in 1771, and became a captain at 20. William Bligh is said to have joined at the incredible age of seven, when his name appeared upon the articles of the warship *Monmouth* as captain's servant. At 16 he was a midshipman, and at 22 a full lieutenant. Dr. Burney's elder son, James, was at sea as a 10-years-old midshipman.

Sir Henry Taylor, who later earned renown as a poet and dramatist, tells in his autobiography, *The Life of Henry Taylor 1800-1875* (Longman's, 1885), how as a lad he took a fancy to the sea, without knowing anything about it. His father so far fell in with his wishes as to let him take a year of it on trial, after which, if he were minded to pursue it, he might.

'Accordingly', he writes, 'I was entered in April, 1814, being then 13½ years of age, as a midshipman aboard the *Elephant* (74), Captain Austen (possibly the same officer who is now Admiral of the Fleet), and if so I should like to see him again, for I admired him in 1814. . . The *Elephant* was paid off in a fortnight, and I was transferred to a troopship.'

Sir Henry, some decades after his brief naval career, became associated with the Tennysonian circle who admired and discussed Jane

Austen so fervently. But he could never have known, never have dreamed, that the naval officer who had made such a deep and lasting impression on him as a boy was own beloved brother to the novelist whom Tennyson placed next to Shakespeare. When in 1814 he signed on as a midshipman in one of Frank's 'old ships', he could never have heard of Jane Austen the authoress, and even if he had, he would never have connected her with Captain Austen. But what a pity he did not discover, even so late as 1865, that the captain he had revered was indeed Admiral Sir Francis Austen, and that he was still living, in his 93rd year, at Portsdown, near Portsmouth. What a glorious reunion they might have had!

Mary Corringham

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David Gilson

Notes on Auction Sales 1983-84

Copies of the first editions of Jane Austen's novels seem to be turning up less often for sale at Christie's and Sotheby's main sale-rooms; during the 1983-84 season each auction house sold only one such edition.

Lot 69 at Sotheby's on 8 December 1983 was a first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814, uncut in the original blue-grey paper boards and off-white paper spines, and with the original printed paper spine



labels; this copy was complete with the half-titles, and with the advertisement leaf at the end of Vol.3, where also four pages of Longman's advertisements dated April 1814 were inserted (*Mansfield Park* was first published early in May 1814). This copy came from the library of Prince Ludwig Joseph Max Starhemberg (1762-1833), Austrian ambassador in London between 1793 and 1807 and again in 1809, and had been sold at Sotheby's as recently as 1976 (24 May 1976, Lot 145) for £1,000; it now sold for £4,200.

On 30 May 1984 Christie's sold as Lot 136A a copy of the first edition of *Emma* 1816 (no half-titles, contemporary half calf with minor defects and bearing the signature of Charlotte Elizabeth Craven; this fetched £800.

Sotheby's sold on 16 July 1984, Lot 50, what is believed to have been Jane Austen's first edition set of Samuel Richardson's novel *Sir Charles Grandison*, 1754. The seven volumes, bound in late 18th century quarter calf and marbled boards, with a 19th century bookplate of a Marquess Conyngham, have Jane Austen's name written on each titlepage; the inscriptions in Vols.3-7 are identical with that in what is believed to be the novelist's copy of Vol.2 of Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* 1759 in the Beinecke Rare Book Library at Yale University, but neither these nor the inscriptions in Vols.1 and 2 resemble Jane Austen's normal signature. However, Jane Austen's fondness for, and familiarity with Richardson's novel are well attested, and the probability that the set was hers seems sufficiently strong; the seven volumes sold for £3,500.

Supplement to Notes for 1982-83. A first edition of *Mansfield Park* in contemporary half vellum with no half-titles was sold by Christie's on 24 November 1982, Lot 7, £220. Two first editions of *Emma* were sold in the United States of America, one by Sotheby Parke Bernet, Inc., New York, on 22 September 1982, Lot 299, \$800 (bound in 19th century half calf, lacking the half-title in Vol. 2), and the other by Leslie Hindman, Inc., Chicago, 4 June 1983, Lot 2, \$2,300 (bound in morocco, gilt). A first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818 in rather worn half calf, with half-titles misbound in Vols.1 and 2, was Lot 61 at Christie's on 29 September 1982 and fetched £280.

David Gilson

A Godmersham Interior?

The illustration opposite (from the papers of Dr S.G. Brade-Birks) is of a painting in the possession of Mr Patrick Rice, great-great-grandson of Jane Austen's brother Edward Knight. The standing figure is believed to be Marianne Knight (1801-1896), while the seated figures could be her sisters Louisa (1804-1889) and Cassandra Jane (1806-1842). The setting may be a room at Godmersham, or an artist's impression of such a room.

Mr C.B. Hogan's bequest

Members of the Jane Austen Society will recall Mr Charles Beecher Hogan's gift in 1974 of the two topaz crosses, and the autograph letter of Jane Austen, 26 May 1801 (Chapman, No. 38) which accompanies them. Mr. Hogan died early in 1983; the greater part of his Jane Austen collection (which included one of the three known copies of the 1816 Philadelphia edition of *Emma*) was left to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University, but he bequeathed to the Jane Austen Society a set of first editions of Jane Austen's novels formerly at Godmersham House and bearing the signatures of Jane Austen's nephew Edward Knight (1794-1879) and her niece Marianne (1801-1896), to whom the set was apparently given by her brother in September 1858. The sixteen volumes (which may have originally belonged to the novelist's brother Edward) lack all but one half-title; they are uniformly bound in contemporary full calf, but have been recently rebacked.

David Gilson

Stanley Graham Brade-Birks, 1887-1982

Mrs Mary K. Attfield has presented to the Jane Austen Society five folders containing material relating to Jane Austen from the papers of her late father, the Reverend Canon Dr S.G. Brade-Birks (Vicar of Godmersham from 1930 to 1977), together with the text of an unpublished book by him on Jane Austen and Kent; the material includes copies of Dr Brade-Birks' own publications on Jane Austen, transcripts and photocopies of letters by the novelist and by members of her family, letters addressed to Dr Brade-Birks in connection with his researches, genealogical material, and miscellaneous ephemera (newspaper cuttings, prospectuses, postcards and photographs, including the photograph of the Knight family silhouette group reproduced in this Report).

Members of the Jane Austen Society having heard of Dr. Brade-Birks only as Vicar of Godmersham may like to know that he was equally distinguished as a scientist and as a local historian. Stanley Graham Birks (he added his wife's surname to his own on marrying Dr Hilda Brade in 1917) took his B.Sc. in geology at Manchester University in 1911, and his M.Sc. at the same university, again in geology, in 1914. He combined scientific studies with the study of theology, being ordained priest in 1915. In 1924 he took his D.Sc., in zoology, at London University. From 1919 to 1948 he was lecturer in geology and zoology at the then South Eastern Agricultural College at Wye in Kent. In 1930 Dr Brade-Birks was installed as Vicar of Godmersham; from 1946 he was Rector also of Crundale, while in 1960 he was made Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral.

Dr Brade-Birks was for many years chairman of Wye Historical

Society, and his deep interest in archaeology, local history, place names and genealogy served him well in his work on Jane Austen. His chief publications on the novelist are:

1. *Jane Austen and Godmersham*. Godmersham, 1938 (a 12-page pamphlet).
2. *Table to show the descent of certain properties to Thomas Knight, of Godmersham, Esquire, and his relationship to the Austen family*. 1941 (a single sheet).
3. 'In Kent we love Jane Austen', *Kentish Pie*, 1 May 1947.
4. Letter to the Editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*, 21 December 1962, p.993, quoting an obituary notice of Jane Austen published in *Kentish Gazette*, 5 August 1817.
5. 'The sources of Jane Austen's Kentish ties', article in the Jane Austen Society's *Report for 1962*.

David Gilson

1

Lady Susan

Lady Susan has recently been republished as the first in a series of volumes that will go to make up *The Jane Austen Library*. It has a Publisher's Preface by Brian Southam. In this he mentions theories that the character of the mercenary Lady Susan was based on someone Jane Austen had known, or at least known about, in real life. One of these is her cousin, Eliza de Feuillide, who later became Mrs Henry Austen. Mr Southam dismisses these theories as "mere speculations". I wish he had done more than this and ruled out Eliza absolutely.

It was Mrs Q.D. Leavis, who, in 1941, found in *Lady Susan* echoes of Eliza's widowhood, which began on 22nd February 1794 when her French aristocrat husband was guillotined in Paris, and also of her eventual remarriage on 31st December 1797. Mrs Leavis accordingly placed the writing of *Lady Susan* after this date. Mr Southam, in his *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts* of 1964, rejected the Leavis theory, believing *Lady Susan* to have been written in 1793/4, at a time before Eliza was a widow and perhaps looking for a new husband. He did, however, turn to *Austen Papers* published in 1942, and refer to letters written by Eliza to another cousin, Philadelphia Walter, and by the same Philadelphia to her brother James. These, Mr Southam felt, might have supported the Leavis theory; for they reveal Eliza as a careless mother of her invalid son Hastings, and as a flirt who was determined to make a second advantageous marriage. I agree that Eliza wrote frivolously and amusingly about herself, but can find nothing really damaging in her letters, nothing approaching the despicable Lady Susan. Eliza wrote, perhaps, to shock her cousin, whom years earlier she had failed to lure to the Steventon theatricals, and whom she may have considered rather a prude. Phila once wrote

to her brother about Eliza, "... for her husband she professes a large share of respect, esteem and the highest opinion of his merits, but confesses that love is not of the number on her side." This is no uncommon relationship; but it is not dishonourable. It is clear that Phila regarded the life lived by Eliza and her mother as rather empty; but she several times stresses the correctness of their conduct of it. Even so, Mr Southam then rejected Eliza as the original of Lady Susan.

I reject this identification for another reason, which supports Mr Southam's 1793/4 dating. There is just enough resemblance in the situations and characters of Eliza and Lady Susan to make *Lady Susan* the very story that Jane Austen would *not* have written when Eliza was recently widowed. It would have been too cruel. Even if she had begun to create or present Lady Susan at or after the time of Eliza's widowhood, it would have occurred to her that someone might imagine she was in fact presenting Eliza; and I think Jane would have destroyed her manuscript. And the later the writing is supposed to have taken place, the greater the danger of someone also equating Jane's beloved brother Henry with the foolish Sir James Martin. And this she could not have borne. *Lady Susan* must have been written before February 1794 – with no thought of Eliza or Henry in mind – and, as we know from water-marks, copied out some time after 1805. At this date it simply never occurred to anyone that Jane had been thinking of her cousin or brother at the original time of writing.

The story of *Lady Susan* runs from some time before Christmas, when one could speak of "... the rest of the winter" as lying ahead; and it causes Lady Susan herself to pass what she describes as "ten weeks penance at Churchill," the house in Kent of her brother-in-law. This seems to mean a period from the latter part of November till the end of the following January. It is not, of course, necessary to suppose that Jane began her writing in an actual November; but it is possible. And why not the November of 1793? She could then have written with no thought of Eliza in mind – neither as a conscious original, nor as the cause of a false identification that might be made by Eliza herself or anyone else. There is no evidence of the Austen family connecting *Lady Susan* with Eliza. Had they done so, is it likely that James Edward Austen-Leigh would have published *Lady Susan* with the second edition of his *Memoir of Jane Austen* in 1871?

William Jarvis

The Dusautoys

I offer these notes to shed light on a family mentioned several times by Jane Austen in her letters. While Mrs George Austen and her daughters were living in Southampton, Jane wrote, on 17th January 1809 to Cassandra at Godmersham, reporting that she and another,

probably Martha Lloyd, had called on “the Miss Williamses who lodge at Dusautoys”. This takes us back to 1758 when Pierre Francois Du Sautoy, a French prisoner of war on parole, had married, at Basingstoke, Mary Abbot, a member of a prominent family of that town, whose finances crashed soon after the marriage. She became the mother of four sons. After her death Pierre Francois made two more marriages, the third in 1775 to Mary Bouchier – the church register says Boucher – at Southampton. The French aristocrat, only son of a younger son, must have been quite badly off, for it seems that he and his new wife took in paying guests. All this was, of course, against the background of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars.

The eldest son of his first marriage, Peter John Du Sautoy, entered the Austen family story by performing, in 1789 at Chawton where he was Curate, the marriage of Jane’s second cousin, Elizabeth Matilda Austen of Tonbridge to John Butler Harrison. And in 1793 Peter’s brother, James Du Sautoy, was married, also at Chawton, to Mary Hinton, daughter of the Rector there. James had been in the Marines and was commissioned in 1777, at the age of fifteen; but he had retired on full pay a little before his marriage. He still had a military life before him, taking command of the Otterton Volunteers, later becoming Barrack Master at Totnes and eventually at Taunton, dying there at the age of ninety-seven in 1859. The marriages of Elizabeth Austen to John Butler Harrison and of James Du Sautoy to Mary Hinton lie behind the remark in an earlier letter of Jane’s from Southampton, where the Harrisons now lived. On 8th February 1807 she had written, “Miss Harrison is going into Devonshire to attend Mrs Dusautoy as usual”. The slightly spinsterish “as usual” makes one suspect an impending confinement; and, sure enough, on 1st July 1807 Thomas, son of Mr James and Mary Dusautoy, was baptised in the parish church at Totnes in Devonshire. Miss Harrison, daughter of John and Elizabeth, can only have been in her late teens when she travelled down to Devonshire on this occasion; and it sounds as if it were not the first time. The family of James Du Sautoy had begun in 1795; and records of baptisms can be found at Otterton and Bickton before the move to Totnes. The note by Dr R.W. Chapman on Jane’s letter of 1807 admits that the Dusautoys and Devonshire had been a puzzle to him; but the facts given here can resolve it.

The last of James and Mary Du Sautoy’s long family was Frances, who was baptised at Berry Pomeroy near Totnes on 11th July 1813. I am told by a descendant of Pierre Francois Du Sautoy, Major Arthur J. Du Sautoy, now living at Kew and the father of Carmen Du Sautoy the actress, that at this date she was the only Frances in the family. And, known as Fanny, she is of very special interest. About a year after her birth, in May 1814 *Mansfield Park* was published; and on 23rd June of that year Jane Austen wrote from Chawton to

Cassandra in London, "We have called upon Miss Dusautoy and Miss Papillon and been very pretty". These ladies were, respectively, grand-daughter of John Hinton, one time Rector of Chawton and sister of James Papillon, the current Rector. Jane goes on, "Miss D. has a great idea of being Fanny Price – she and her youngest sister together, who is named Fanny". This last can be no other than the Frances Du Sautoy born in 1813. "Miss D." must be Mary, daughter of James and Mary Du Sautoy, born in 1795 and, sadly, to die in 1818. One wonders whether the baby Fanny was there at Chawton with her sister, and even whether Jane Austen had seen the one with the other in her arms. This would add point to her amused and gentle irony. Mary Du Sautoy's father had once been in the Marines; and Frances, her youngest sister, would, undoubtedly, have been known as Fanny. If Mary liked to think that together they had gone to the making of Fanny Price, that did no harm.

Incidentally Frances Du Sautoy never married and lived to be very nearly a hundred, dying at Torquay on 14th April 1913 – an immense span from the date of her parents' marriage at Chawton in 1793.

William Jarvis

"Neither Rich nor Handsome. . ."

In the Annual Report for 1982 I gave a brief sketch of the "Four Manly Boys" of the Fowle family and their relationships with the Austens. The eldest of the four, Fulwar Craven Fowle, married his first cousin Elizabeth Lloyd; it is from their union that I am descended on my mother's side.

Elizabeth's two sisters, Martha and Mary Lloyd, both married into the Austen family. The following few pages are an attempt to give a very brief account of these two ladies, whose ties with the lives of Cassandra, Jane and other members of their family, were of course much closer and more intimate than those of the Fowles.

In Chapman's index to Jane's "Letters" neither Martha nor Mary Lloyd are given birth-dates; but their baptisms are recorded in the Church register of Bishopstone, Wilts, as November 1765 and May 1771 respectively. Thus the first fact that may come as a surprise to many readers is that Jane Austen's great friend Martha Lloyd was ten years older than herself.

After an intensely unhappy childhood under their mother "the cruel Mrs Craven", the two Craven sisters Martha and Jane were fortunate to find good husbands in the persons of two obscure country parsons, Nowes Lloyd and Thomas Fowle. Each proceeded to bring up a family of four children: Martha Lloyd had three girls and a boy, Jane Fowle four boys.

The two families were brought happily together in 1771 when the

living of Enborne, Berks, was offered to Martha's husband Nowes by her kinsman the sixth Lord Craven. The Lloyds moved in to set up house in the rectory at Enborne, only 3½ miles from Kintbury, where the Fowles lived. And there for four years the eight children all grew up together in health and security. But in 1775 the scourge of smallpox invaded the Newbury area, and the whole household of nine persons in the Enborne parsonage was stricken with the dread disease. Eight survived, but the one who died was the seven-year-old Charles Lloyd, the apple of his parents' eye.

The faces of the Lloyd sisters were scarred for life by the marks of smallpox. Elizabeth, who apparently was the prettiest of the three, escaped lightly; but Martha and Mary both suffered for the rest of their lives from this unfortunate handicap.

When James Austen visited his young friends the Fowles at Kintbury at the age of fifteen or so, he must have been introduced to the Lloyds at Enborne. There can be little doubt that his academic prowess as an Oxford undergraduate and fluent writer of verse would have won him the wondering admiration of nine-year-old Mary. Then when Cassandra and Jane ended their boarding-school careers, it cannot have been long before family meetings took place between the four Fowles, the three Lloyds and the five Austens then living at Steventon rectory, ranging in age from twenty-three-year-old Fulwar Craven Fowle, recently ordained, to eight-year-old Charles Austen. Established friendships were strengthened, new ones sprang up. In 1787, in Volume The First of the *Juvenilia*, we find Jane's humorous dedication of "Frederic and Elfrida" to Martha Lloyd, "as a small testimony of the gratitude I feel for your late generosity to me in finishing my muslin cloak."

In 1789 the Rev. Nowes Lloyd died; and as is usually the case with incumbents, left his wife and children bereft at one stroke of the head of the household, the breadwinner and the house that had been their home. What could their patron Lord Craven do for them now? Nothing apparently, for he was by this time sullenly drinking himself to an unlamented end.

It was at this critical moment that the kind-hearted and practical George Austen stepped in and offered Mrs Lloyd the lease of the parsonage at Deane, only a mile and a half distant from Steventon. Gladly the offer was accepted; and to the great satisfaction of everyone (including Mrs Austen, who had borne her first three children there), the Lloyds moved into the old house.

Mrs Austen in fact, who certainly did not suffer fools gladly, gave her strong and friendly approbation to the Lloyd family as near neighbours. So, with Cassandra, Jane, Henry and Charles all living at Steventon, Lloyds and Austens became "fast friends." James, too, now a Fellow of St John's Oxford and performing clerical duties in



Culburn Church near Newbury Park.
 Engraved by J. H. P. from a drawing by J. H. P.

various parishes near Steventon, had plenty of time to spend with his family at home, being looked up to by all at Steventon, particularly for his enthusiastic promotion of the rectory theatricals. In January 1790 "The Sultan" was presented, the epilogue being written by James and spoken by their delightful cousin Miss Jane Cooper "in the character of Roxalana." We may be sure that in all the fun and excitement of those Christmas holidays, Mary Lloyd, now 19, had lost nothing of her admiration for James, with his erudition and ponderous humour, as well as his sociable response to being the centre of attention and praise. She was no doubt well aware, however, that in her comparatively lowly situation she stood little chance of attracting his permanent attachment.

And so in fact it befell; for in another year or so James chose himself a wife in the person of Anne Mathew (granddaughter of a duke!), and married her in March 1792.

Not only were Mary's faint hopes thus dashed, but – far worse – James needed a capacious house for his bride, and so the Lloyds must give up Deane parsonage. However much feared or anticipated beforehand, it must have been a hard blow. Mrs Lloyd was now into her sixties, and only one of her daughters, Elizabeth Fowle, was married. Of the two remaining spinsters, Martha was 26, (often thought of in those days as the verge of old-maidhood) and Mary 21. Now they must seek a new roof for their humble possessions, a new social scene in which to set that most vital of all genteel female hopes, the hope of marriage.

They made the best of the situation when Mrs Lloyd was able to move to Ibthorp House, a pleasant home on the outskirts of Hurstbourne Tarrant. Here they settled fairly happily, but cut off from the almost daily intercourse with the Steventon family which they had so much enjoyed for three happy years.

At the moment of parting Jane gave Mary Lloyd the tiny housewife, "furnished with minikin needles and fine thread", which we may read about in the Life and Letters. Later in the same year she dedicated her Juvenilia story of "Evelyn" to her friend. There can be no doubt that Jane in her later teens was genuinely fond of both Martha and Mary; and their friendships were maintained despite the distance that now separated them from both Steventon and Kintbury.

Four years later there comes another decisive turn of fortune. The spinster Lloyd sisters, still of course extremely interested in matrimony, both became involved, in the autumn of 1796, in affairs of the heart, one of which turned out to be a wry little tragedy, while the other was celebrated with wedding bells. Let us take the happier event first.

Having lost his first wife after only three years of marriage, James Austen was soon looking round for a second. Despite high-sounding sonnets written to various local beauties in earlier years, and a quite

ridiculous flirtation with his extremely flirtatious widowed cousin Elizabeth de Feuillide, James as a widower of thirty-one with an orphaned baby daughter on his hands, had by this time perhaps enough sense to realise that what he needed above all was a woman who knew him well, one who would always look up to him as a man of learning yet always manage his often unrealistic life-style with a firm and economical hand. It may be he looked back over fifteen years of happy scenes at Enborne, Deane and Steventon and was moved by memories of girlish devotion to recall, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, "I was adored once too."

In due time James made his choice. Cousin Elizabeth de Feuillide herself, well in touch with Austen family affairs, writes to her cousin Phila: "James has chosen a second wife in the person of Miss Mary Lloyd, who is neither rich nor handsome but very sensible and good-humoured. Jane seems much pleased with the match and it is natural she should, having long known and liked the lady."

So on a snow-sprinkled morning in January 1797 the worthy Rev. James Austen leads Mary Lloyd from Hurstbourne's lovely church back to Deane parsonage, her former home, as Mrs James Austen.

At almost the same time Martha Lloyd, who could also be described as "neither rich nor handsome", now 31 years old, is being approached apparently by a certain Mr W. Mrs Austen's letter on the subject might here be quoted more fully, but space forbids. It must suffice to say that having told Mary that she was her first choice as a wife for James, Mrs Austen goes on to encourage Martha too in her hopes of attracting a husband. It would seem that Martha, having asked the older woman's blessing on the attachment, was convinced that she was on the very brink of an offer of marriage from Mr W.

Poor Martha! The romance was surely doomed to fail, and we may be certain that the failure, in the very midst of her younger sister's success, hurt and humiliated her a great deal. It is two years before Jane can write: "Martha is in better looks and spirits than she has enjoyed for a long time... and... will now be able to jest openly about Mr W." Does not the phrase "jest openly" indicate that there was something ridiculous about the whole affair?

To return to the marriage of James and Mary: despite Mrs Austen's and Jane's strong approbation of the match, it becomes plain, after about five years, that all is not what it might be in the household at Deane. For there now begins, in Jane's Letters, a series of critical remarks which indicate that she sees a deterioration in James' more attractive traits and an increase in his shortcomings; the implication being that it is Mary who is largely responsible for this. Some writers have tended to seize on these references and to heap upon Mary a number of character-faults to explain the neurotic tendencies towards melancholy and restless indecisiveness to which

James must certainly have been subject whoever he had married.

The fact that Mary was parsimonious, even at times grasping, given also to small-minded anxieties and self torment over minor matters, may be admitted. But she had lived many years as the youngest, and brotherless, daughter in an impecunious household, and entirely lacked the sort of education and warm family upbringing that the Austens had enjoyed. Against all expectations she had become the chosen bride of a man whom she had idolized since childhood, only to find that he needed a great deal of firm guidance through periods of over-ambitious spending alternating with fits of nervous gloom. She had borne him two healthy and intelligent children whom they both made much of; yet had at the same time taken on the care of an infant step-daughter who was now growing up into a "difficult" child, and receiving, it seems, little help from her husband in the process. There can be no question that Mrs James Austen, a natural worrier, had a good deal to worry about after five years of marriage. Though she occasionally offended Jane by her mistakes, it can be said that she was a person who was always trying her best. In fact, on examining all the references to Mary in the Letters, she is just as often seen to be genuinely concerned for the welfare of friends or neighbours, or sensibly attempting to be an economical housewife, or showing hospitality in her invitations to various people to visit Deane.

In James' "Journal" we find a poem "To April" (1805), ending with this tribute, that Mary has been

... Found in each trying scene of Life
Anxious and earnest to fulfil
The claims of Mother, Friend and Wife.
Yes, my dear Mary, take, nor blush to read
A husband's well-earned praise, domestic virtue's meed.

Again, in 1812, the verses "To Mary on her Wedding-day" make comparison between that hard weather of January 1797 and the storms and disappointments of Life, ending with the lines:

Then read, my love, these artless lays,
And blush not at a husband's praise,
Whom fifteen years of love have taught
To prize your merits as he ought.

By the time these latter lines were written Mary was forty-three years old. Can one really believe, then, that they were composed by a man "infatuated", as one writer has recently said, by his wife? I prefer to think that James's sentiments are as sincere and valid here as in any of his other writings.

But if Mary Lloyd's shortcomings lost her the girlhood admiration of Jane Austen, Martha's strength of character gained her adult affection more and more until her dying day. "I love Martha more

than ever," Jane writes as early as 1799, "and mean to go and see her if I can when she gets home."

In fact Martha and Jane did see each other as often as they could during those years when Martha was at Ibthorp, looking after a failing mother, and Jane was still at Steventon. Every reference in the Letters is warm with the deep pleasure of anticipating visits to come, enjoying their friendship together, or recalling those just past. We may recall how their idea of fun is to have to share a bed for the night, affording the rich chance to chat until two in the morning: or, after a strenuous walk, to tumble into a chaise "one upon the other, our heads hanging out at one door and our feet at the opposite." Through the harassing times of the removal from Steventon and the much-disliked sojourn at Bath the fast friendship is especially evident.

During the "partnership" at Southampton and Chawton, Martha's companionship is obviously invaluable in keeping up Jane's spirits at a time when all the creative impulses of the great artist must have been at work but the opportunity to sit down and actually write a novel never seemed to present itself. We see Martha, now in her forties, growing into the very paragon of all vigorous, cheerful, life-loving maiden aunts: despite her ten years' seniority she will go with Jane on a long walk in bracing December weather ("we went by the Ferry and returned by the Bridge and were scarcely at all fatigued"); and greatly enjoy a ball "in the same room in which we danced 15 years ago!" On passing through Winchester she will take Jane's strapping young nephews out for the afternoon and make sure they make up for College diet by having a satisfying half-hour at the pastrycook's. She will be off to the races with Edward in the rain; or arrive full of cheerfulness from a visit to the Isle of Wight to be regaled with her favourite spruce beer that has been specially brewed for her return. She will make her friend Jane write scathing jokes about her flirtatious conversations with the grave and reverend Dr. Mant; and will cause the aged, grumpy and garrulous Miss Murden to appear "a different creature" by helping her to find "a situation that bids very fair for her comfort."

When her friends or their children are ill, Martha is always in demand, though when Jane wishes to be with Cassandra at Godmersham or elsewhere, she stays at home to look after Mrs Austen, and Jane writes: "we are sure of my mother and Martha being happy together." She pays many a visit to Barton Court at Kintbury, where Mrs Dundas, the Fowles' family friend, is an almost permanent invalid. She is in fact at Barton when she receives from Jane a letter containing what must have been a touching and heart-warming tribute to herself from a deeply loving friend: "You are made for doing good and have quite as great a turn for it I think as for physicking little children. The mental Physick which you have been

lately applying bears a stamp beyond all common Charity, and I hope a Blessing will continue to attend it."

In 1817 Martha gamely takes over once more at Chawton to look after Mrs Austen, so that Cassandra may go to be with Jane on the last sad journey to Winchester; and she is mentioned with tender affection, as being completely a member of the much-loved family, in each of the last two letters Jane Austen ever wrote.

Yet the climax of Martha Lloyd's life, a whole decade after Jane's death, was still to come, when at long last she married the man she had always loved most, Jane's fond and admired brother Francis Austen. She was a spinster of sixty-three, he a widower of fifty-four, with still a good many years of a distinguished naval career ahead of him. What was perhaps more germane to his need for a second marriage was that his first wife Mary (née Gibson) had died in 1823, leaving him with a family of eleven children, ranging in age from sixteen to infancy.

Now that Mrs Austen had also died, Martha was free of all other commitments at last; and who better to do the job than the perfect maiden aunt who had such "a turn for physicking little children"? It was a good many years now since Mrs Austen, Cassandra and Jane had all encouraged Martha, with gentle jokes, to pursue her affection for their beloved 'Fly'.

In 1837 Rear Admiral Austen received a K.C.B. from King William IV; so for the last six years of her life our humble Martha Lloyd becomes Lady Austen.

What of Mary's last years? After James' death in 1819 she lived at various places in the neighbourhood of Newbury, near her childhood home of Enborne and her relatives at Kintbury, to die at Speen in 1843. She was buried with James at Steventon; and a wall tablet in the chancel there, erected by her two children, commemorates "... The honoured memory of their good and affectionate mother", whom they had in fact loved and respected all their lives. We may be allowed to conclude that Mary Lloyd, though neither rich nor handsome, was a stout-hearted, loyal and worthy individual.

George Sawtell

Jane Austen and Bristol

Though only thirteen miles from its sister and rival city, Bath, Bristol figures much less prominently in the life and novels of Jane Austen. Yet there is reason to believe not only that she was fairly well acquainted with Bristol, but that she definitely preferred it to Bath.

The pleasure-orientated parts of Bristol in Jane Austen's time were Hotwells, which was enjoying its last remnants of renown, and Clifton, whose star was by contrast still rising. The hot well which gave the former place its name was situated at river level, and its

waters had attracted visitors throughout the eighteenth century, but now, though the pump room and colonnade of shops were still patronised, most people of fashion chose to lodge in Clifton. This was the salubrious suburb being laid out on the cliffs above Hotwells; here were to be found the assembly rooms and elegant terraces and crescents of houses, all at a healthy remove from the docks and workaday districts of the city. Immediately beyond Clifton lay the Downs, a plateau of open land perfect for recreational walks and rides.

It seems to have been the airy situation of Clifton that Jane Austen valued, in comparison with the “stewpot” of Bath, as it was described by Hester Thrale Piozzi. In Bath Jane was obliged to make her home for five years, and characteristically she endeavoured to make the best of it. Her true sentiments emerge, however, in a letter written to Cassandra on 30 June 1808, when, apropos of nothing, she could not help exclaiming, “It is two years tomorrow since we left Bath for Clifton, with what happy feelings of escape!”

In itself this need not be taken as praise for Clifton, where the Austens stayed only briefly before making a more permanent home in Southampton. But considered together with another reference to Clifton which Jane made when writing to Cassandra on 23 June 1814, it does appear that both sisters favoured the resort on the side of a cliff to the resort enclosed by hills.

“Instead of Bath the Deans Dundases have taken a house in Clifton – Richmond Terrace – and she [Martha Lloyd] is as glad of the change as even you or I should be, or almost. She will now be able to go on from Berks and visit them without any fears from heat.” One is instantly reminded of Anne Elliot’s “dreading the possible heats of September in all the white glare of Bath.”

The earliest use of Bristol in Jane Austen’s fiction occurs in *Lesley Castle*. Knowing how scrupulous she was about writing only of places with which she was personally acquainted, it may be fair to assume that she had already visited the city by 1792, the year in which the letters comprising the fragment are dated. From the very first, Bristol is associated with health. Eloisa Lutterell has been deranged by the sudden death of her lover; her pragmatic sister, Charlotte, writes, “She is still extremely ill, and her Physicians are greatly afraid of her going into a Decline. We are therefore preparing for Bristol, where we mean to be in the course of the next week.”

Charlotte subsequently reports from Bristol, “Poor Eloisa is still so very indifferent both in Health and Spirits, and I very much fear, the air of the Bristol downs, healthy as it is, has been unable to drive poor Henry from her remembrance.”

We learn also from this letter of Charlotte’s, which is dated 27 February, that the fashionable season for visiting Bristol differed from that of Bath. “Eloisa’s indisposition has brought us to Bristol at

so unfashionable a season of the year, that we have actually seen but one genteel family since we came. Mr and Mrs Marlowe are very agreeable people; the ill health of their little boy occasioned their arrival here." (One wonders how the majority of people managed to time their indispositions more accurately.) This is an early example of the exactitude on such points that Jane Austen was to show throughout her writing career. The Bristol directory for 1793 informs intending visitors that lodgings in Hotwells or Clifton would cost them 10s a week for each room between 25 March and 29 September, but only 5s during the other six months.

In *Northanger Abbey*, therefore, we can be sure that there is some truth as well as sour grapes in Anne Thorpe's remark about an excursion to Bristol from Bath, in February, from which she has been excluded, "It must be the dullest thing in the world, for there is not a soul in Clifton at this time of the year."

Compare these references with Jane Austen's portrayal of Bath, which always seems full of the best people during the first two months of the calendar. This is the time when Lady Russell pays her annual visit to Bath; the Dowager Viscountess Dalrymple goes there then; and Catherine Morland certainly finds the Assembly Rooms crowded enough. When Henry Crawford announces his intention of joining his uncle in Bath, it is October, and Tom Bertram remarks, "It is early for Bath. – You will find nobody there." Of Bristol he is more likely to have said, "It is late."

In *Lesley Castle* Mrs Marlowe has a brother named Mr Cleveland: "A good-looking young man," says Charlotte, "I tell Eloisa to set her cap at him." That phrase, so abhorrent to Marianne Dashwood, is one of several links with *Sense and Sensibility*, in which the name Cleveland is used again, this time for a house, Mr Palmer's residence, which was "within a few miles of Bristol" in the county of Somerset. Jane Austen shows a lively awareness of the place-names of the region; the little town of Clevedon is fourteen miles to the south west of Bristol, and was at that time in Somerset, though now obliged (like Bath) to belong to Avon.

In the grounds of Cleveland, Marianne can think only of being in the same county as Willoughby's home, Combe Magna. "Her eye, wandering over a wide tract of country to the south east, could fondly rest on the farthest ridge of hills on the horizon, and fancy that from their summit, Combe Magna might be seen." This is consistent with looking from Clevedon over the low-lying "moors" of North Somerset towards the Mendips; the villages in this part of the world are rich in double-barrelled names, including Chew Magna, and many with the component of Combe.

The association of Clifton with health-restoring properties is sustained in two of the later novels, *Emma* and *Persuasion*. Mr and

Mrs Musgrove speak of having been to Clifton “seven or eight years ago.” Since they had then no daughters old enough to benefit from the social pleasures of the place, and since they are such steady sort of people themselves, I think we may presume they went there for their health. And Mrs Elton hearing that Mrs Churchill is coming south in search of a warmer climate, can hardly believe that she should choose London. “If she is really ill, why not go to Bath, Mr Weston? To Bath, or to Clifton?”

Mrs Elton, of course, is the one true Bristolian of the novels – although her fiancé prefers her to be known as “Miss Hawkins of Bath.” “But Bristol was her home, the very heart of Bristol.” Her father had been “a Bristol – merchant of course, he must be called,” though Emma suspects him of a rather lowly line of trade. The elder sister, Selina, has escaped through marriage from that dreadful “very heart of Bristol” and now lives in the much-vaunted “Maple Grove,” which is merely “near Bristol.”

It is my guess that “Maple Grove” was one of the rather pleasant mini-mansions which successful Bristol businessmen were building for themselves at this time on the north west approaches to the city, beyond the Downs. We know that it was near enough for Selina Suckling to go “into Bristol” without a second thought; we know that although it was “very retired” behind its shrubbery it was bothered by neighbours, those upstart Tupmans who had made their fortune in Birmingham! And we assuredly know that when the Sucklings twice went exploring in their barouche-landau, it was to Kingsweston, the altogether wilder region beyond this new suburbia.

Kingsweston, with its hanging woods and rocky ravines, appealed to the late eighteenth century taste for the picturesque, and was much visited by the leisured classes. In addition to the natural beauties of Kingsweston, there were some man-made attractions for visitors, and it is John Thorpe’s casual mention of one of these, Blaize Castle, that arouses Catherine Morland’s interest – which in turn encourages him to lie.

“Blaize Castle!” cried Catherine; “what is that?”

“The finest place in England – worth going fifty miles at any time to see.”

“What, is it really a castle, an old castle?”

“The oldest in the kingdom.”

“But is it exactly what one read of?”

“Exactly – the very same.”

“But now really – are there towers and long galleries?”



Blaise Castle
(Bristol City Council)
is opening to the public from September 1985

“By dozens.”

“Then I should like to see it; but I cannot – I cannot go.”

As well as being an indictment of John Thorpe – not only of his readiness to abandon truth to his own interests, but of his paucity of imagination, too, for it will be observed that he can only echo Catherine’s words – this passage is a joke at the expense of Catherine’s ignorance, credulity, and “passion for ancient edifices”, a joke which Jane Austen evidently expected her readers to understand, since it is never subsequently explained either to Catherine or to us. In fact, far from being “the oldest in the kingdom,” Blaise Castle (as it is correctly spelt) was a sham built in 1766 for Thomas Farr, a Bristol sugar-merchant, with the idea of embellishing the horizon as seen from the windows of his house, and at the same time providing a hill-top platform from which to enjoy the surrounding views. He paid £3,000 for his sham, which consists of one large circular room with three small towers around it, castellated and pierced by cruciform arrow-slits.

The Thorpes’ first attempt to reach Bristol fails, and the second, made without Catherine, is described to her by Maria Thorpe. “They had driven directly to the York Hotel, ate some soup, and bespoke an early dinner, walked down to the Pump Room, tasted the water, and laid out some shillings in purses and spars; thence adjourned to eat ices at a pastry-cook’s, and hurrying back to the Hotel, swallowed their dinner in haste.” To accomplish even so little, they had to leave Bath at eight in the morning and return in darkness. To Catherine’s satisfaction, “It appeared Blaize Castle had never been thought of” – although Isabella has employed the day as profitably, in engaging herself to James Morland, as her author has, in getting this event out of the way off-stage.

So whilst it is notable that in her mature fiction Jane Austen never accompanies her characters to Bristol, perhaps in accordance with the famous advice she gave her niece Anna, yet her references to the city by no means betray any imperfect knowledge of the place which she may have been conscious of herself.

She had cause to mention Clifton once more in a letter. The Reverend Samuel Blackall, a friend of the Austens’ neighbour Mrs Lefroy, had been an early admirer, almost a suitor, of Jane, hinting in the autumn of 1798 that he might have proposed marriage had his financial circumstances permitted. Writing to her brother Frank on 3 July 1813, Jane enquired, “I wonder whether you happened to see Mr Blackall’s marriage in the Papers last Jany. We did. He was married at Clifton to a Miss Lewis, whose father had been late of Antigua. I should very much like to know what sort of woman she is. He was a piece of Perfection, noisy Perfection himself which I always recollect with regard. – We had noticed a few months before his succeeding to

YE KNOW NOT WHAT MANNER OF
SPIRIT YE ARE OF.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

PARISH CHURCH OF CLIFTON,

Near Bristol,

ON

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 1829.

BY THE

REV^d HENRY T. AUSTEN, M. A.

PERPETUAL CURATE OF BENTLEY, HANTS,
AND DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF MORLEY.

Published at the Request of many of the Congregation.

C. C.

"Preaching Peace by Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all."

Bristol :

PUBLISHED BY W. BROWNE, 49, CLARE STREET ;

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STATIONERS' COURT, LONDON.

1829.

a College Living, the very Living which we remembered his talking of and wishing for; an exceeding good one, Great Cadbury in Somersetshire." In fact, *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* of Saturday, 9 January 1813 gives the information: "Tuesday, at Clifton, the Reverend Samuel Blackall, rector of North Cadbury, Somerset, to Susannah, eldest daughter of James Lewis Esq. of Clifton, late of Jamaica."

It was at the same parish church of Clifton, St Andrews, where Susannah and Samuel were married, that the Reverend Henry Austen was invited to preach on 22 March 1829. Henry was probably in Clifton for the health of his second wife, Eleanor, who though considerably younger than himself, was arthritic; a few years later he took her to Bath. We know that Jane thought Henry's sermons "very superior," and this one, delivered in a city with a fine tradition of printing, was published "at the request of many of the congregation."

A final link between the Austens and Bristol appears on a memorial stone bearing Frank's name to be found in one of the city's graveyards, St Luke's at Brislington. It marks the burial-place of his son-in-law John Hubback. In 1842 this barrister from London married Catherine Anne, Frank's fourth daughter, who was named for the heroines of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, the two novels published posthumously in the year of her birth. Catherine's happiness and security in the marriage were but brief. Within six years her husband suffered a severe mental breakdown, and he spent the last forty years of his life in an asylum, Brislington House, an institution which had been founded by the Quaker Dr Fox and which was run on remarkably advanced and humanitarian lines. Since the family had no other connection with Bristol, it can only have been the excellent reputation of Brislington House which induced Catherine to place her husband there.

Left with three sons to support, Catherine turned to novel-writing, and in 1850 published a completion of *The Watsons* which she called *The Younger Sister*, basing it on an account her aunt Cassandra had given her in her childhood of Jane's own intentions for the story. There followed a series of mediocre but fairly popular novels; and then in 1871, at the age of fifty-three, Catherine bravely emigrated to California with her middle son, Edward. The youngest son, Charles, later sailed for America, and it was while visiting his home in Virginia that Catherine died very suddenly in 1877.

Her eldest son, John, had gone into his uncle Joseph Hubback's grain importing business in Liverpool. Later, in collaboration with his daughter Edith, he was to publish *Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers*, about the naval careers of Frank and Charles. John had grown up in the home of his grandfather, Sir Francis Austen, for whom he had a profound respect. When his father died at Brislington in 1888 John took the opportunity to inscribe the gravestone also with his mother's name –

the only memorial to her in the land of her birth, proudly recording that she had been the daughter of Admiral Sir F.W. Austen.

Maggie Lane

Address given by the President at the Annual General Meeting.

The Insufferable Bad Manners of Mr Darcy

It is a truth, I suppose, universally acknowledged, that Mrs Bennet (of *Pride and Prejudice*) never uttered a sensible remark in her life. But I cannot quite agree with that, since she is the only person in the book strong-minded enough to protest openly at what she quite rightly calls 'the shocking rudeness of Mr Darcy'. 'He is a most disagreeable, horrid man,' she told her husband, 'not at all worth pleasing. So high and so conceited that there was no enduring him! He walked here, and he walked there, fancying himself so very great! . . . I wish you had been there, my dear, to give him one of your set-downs. I quite detest the man.' And this fierce diatribe, remember, came from a mother who was prepared to fawn on any young man of means who might be lured into marrying one of her daughters.

It always strikes me with surprise, every time that I return to *Pride and Prejudice*, that Mr Darcy could have made himself so intolerable. After all, he had everything in the world going for him. Well born, though not actually sporting a title, rich, tall, handsome and highly intelligent, with a splendid estate in Derbyshire and plenty of desirable connections, it is extraordinary that on coming into Hertfordshire with his amiable friend Charles Bingley, he should have lost no time in being as disagreeable as possible and arousing everyone's antipathy against him. On his first appearance in the assembly room, at a local ball, 'Mr Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien, and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a year. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, the ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr Bingley, and he was looked at with great admiration for about half the evening, till *his manners* gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud; to be above his company, and to be above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance' – 'countenance' being what we now call 'expression' – 'and being unworthy to be compared with his friend.'

Now this behaviour is really very strange, for Mr Darcy, like Jane Austen herself, belonged to a period when good manners, or 'good breeding', were of paramount importance – almost, perhaps, to the point of obsession – and class distinction and snobbery were taken for

granted to an extent that would be quite unacceptable today. And Mr Darcy was well read, and could hardly have been ignorant of the most sensationally best-selling book on good manners that has ever been published – *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son*. This fascinating book had appeared in 1774, a year after Chesterfield's death, and little more than a year before Jane Austen was born. It had run through five editions by the end of that year, and right up to our own day, through the Georgian and Victorian eras and the twentieth century has been a sort of Bible of good manners and good breeding; how to please in company, how to make oneself liked, how to be a success in the world and at ease with other people. There was even, in the first year of Queen Victoria's reign, an immensely successful American edition, called '*The American Chesterfield, or Way to Wealth, Honour and Distinction, . . . suited to the Youth of the United States, by a Member of the Philadelphia Bar.*' So it would be absurd to suppose that Jane Austen, with her appetite for reading and her access to public libraries, had never come in contact with Lord Chesterfield; or that Darcy, with his own splendid library at Pemberley, and his inflated views of his gentlemanly status, could possibly be ignorant of Chesterfield's worldly teaching. (I am speaking here of Darcy, of course, as though he were a real live person, not a figment of Jane Austen's imagination, because that is what so many of her characters have become: we know some of them as well as if they were our own relations.)

Now, before we examine Darcy's behaviour in detail, I would like to take a look with you at Lord Chesterfield himself, and how it was that he came to be one of the celebrated arbiters of good manners, from the late eighteenth century to the present day. Nothing could have been further than that from his intentions. The letters are intensely private, written over 24 years to his only child, Philip Stanhope, an illegitimate son, who of course couldn't succeed to his father's title or position, but whom he hoped to turn into a charming, civilised and successful man – a diplomat, preferably – to whom he would always be a proud and loving father. Unfortunately the boy, though quite intelligent and respectable and twice elected a Member of Parliament, was something of a disappointment, and died at the age of thirty-six.

It then came to light that Philip had been secretly married for several years to a respectable but undistinguished wife, who had borne him two sons. Shocked as Lord Chesterfield must have been at the discovery of this imprudent marriage, he accepted the situation gracefully and made generous provision for the support of his son's widow and the education of her little boys. Five years later, when Chesterfield himself had died, the widowed Mrs. Stanhope sold the letters which her husband had kept with great care ever since the first one was read to him by his governess at five years old, and made the



4th Earl of Chesterfield
(National Portrait Gallery)

not inconsiderable sum of £1500, which by today's standards would be more like £50,000. As a manual of education and good manners the letters were published by James Dodsley, who had brought out Johnson's *Dictionary* some twenty years earlier, and were an immediate success. *The Monthly Review* ran a serial discussion of it for several months, it was talked of everywhere, and from then on, even into the present day, Lord Chesterfield's name has meant good manners, good breeding and charm, and has been on the shelves of every reputable library. I am sure it must have been at Pemberley, handsomely bound in calf with gilded lettering and the Darcy coat of arms emblazoned on the front, and in Mr Bennet's library, too, in a more modestly priced edition. And I am quite sure Darcy must have read it, though why he so foolishly chose not to profit by it is another matter.

But before, as I suggested, we examine Darcy's ill-judged indifference to Lord Chesterfield's advice, let us look at that remarkable man himself, to trace the strange course of chance which took him from a most unlikely beginning to a world-acclaimed position as guru of good manners and social success.

His early infancy, as the eldest son of Lord Stanhope, heir to the second Earl of Chesterfield, was hardly promising; a seven months' child, he was small and delicate, and the atmosphere of his home was far from happy. His father was boorish in behaviour, a heavy drinker, rough mannered and aggressive. He felt no interest in his little son and showed him no affection. His mother, only child of the first Marquis of Halifax, wisest and best statesman of his time, was of a different breed. *Her* father – and here we find fascinating evidence of what one might call psychological heredity – had written *her* a series of letters, advice for her own protection and happiness, which she devotedly kept at her bedside for the rest of her life. The tone throughout is gentle, worldly, protective. 'To understand the world, and to like it,' he once wrote, 'are two things not easily to be reconciled,' and the truth of this observation was no doubt brought home to the poor girl in the miseries of her married life with Lord Stanhope. Miscarriages and childbirths, confinement for years in one or other of her husband's numerous estates in the dull uncongenial midlands, a partner growing ever more deaf and quarrelsome and indifferent to company, these were the trials which not even her father's counsel could do much to alleviate. And when her little son was no more than a year old her beloved father suddenly died, and she found herself cut off from the source of gentle guidance and support on which she had depended since childhood.

Yet not entirely. Her mother, Lady Halifax, who had still another thirty-two years of energetic life before her, was a determined ally, and now in her widowhood, with ample means and a large and handsome house in St James's Square, was able to do much to

relieve the worries of her daughter. The child, Philip, for instance, who was small and delicate – would he not be much better in London, where it would give her pleasure to look after him, and there were excellent doctors? Her daughter, unhappily exiled from London and expecting another baby, was thankful to think of her little boy growing up in her own happy nursery. Her husband was quite indifferent whether the child went or stayed. He had sold his own London house, was drinking uncontrollably, and now threatened to live permanently abroad; so the transference of the little boy, a few months before his second birthday, to the benevolent Halifax atmosphere, was obviously a relief. Appropriate preparations were made on the upper floors of Halifax House and a French nurse engaged, so that without any trouble at all the child would grow up in two languages. The process which was later to inspire him as a teacher had begun.

Lady Halifax's drawing-room was a busy one, and since in those days London was small enough for all the important people to know one another, Philip, as soon as he was old enough to be dressed up in buckled shoes and velvet coat, would be displayed before a great many notable and extraordinary men and women. Some of the great ladies, duchesses mostly, were very old, painted and powdered and glittering with diamonds, having reached their present eminence by way of Charles II. There were also younger beauties, toasts of the Kit-Kat Club and wives of influential ministers, who would extend a finger or pat his head with their fan as he was shepherded through the rooms before being taken for his daily walk in St James's Park. There were imposing and grandly dressed gentlemen, too, who had climbed to their present eminence and dukedoms by way of political chicanery and double dealing, and who now, in these last years of Queen Anne, were at leisure to take things easily and enjoy the spoils.

The little boy was fascinated by everything he saw, and became more and more observant. 'I have never in my life,' he wrote many years later, 'been in company without observing even the shoe-buckles that everyone was wearing.' So, in this highly sophisticated scene, as he grew older, he became aware that the people who were most successful, those whom everyone liked and favoured, were the ones who *wished* to please, and formed their manners on the desire and principle of being agreeable to others. 'Pleasing in company,' he wrote in one of his letters to his son, 'is the only way of being pleased in it yourself.' How much better Mr Darcy would have done at Netherfield if he had observed that maxim! 'I confess,' Chesterfield admitted, 'that it is impossible to reduce the art of pleasing to a system . . . But this principle I will lay down, that the desire of pleasing is at least half the art of doing it.' It is the *desire* of pleasing, in the beginning, that Darcy seems to lack. He is sufficiently satisfied with himself, with his station, his wealth, his social position – and,

presumably, his good looks as well – to feel that no conciliatory effort on his part is necessary.

Let us look at one or two of those examples of Darcy's bad manners which would have shocked Lord Chesterfield – not on moral grounds, naturally, but because of their stupidity. The first, of course, is his appearance at the local assembly, when he refuses to dance and stands looking at the company with contempt. Worse still, when amiably pressed by Bingley to dance with Elizabeth Bennet, since she is without a partner, he has the effrontery to say in a clear voice, she being near enough to hear him – 'She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men.'

One can hardly believe in such ill-bred effrontery. It is almost worthy of Darcy's insufferable aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and indeed it's possible that in their close family relationship he may have been influenced by her. Lady Catherine was one of the very few women whom he would never have dared to despise, though in the late eighteenth century, when the first sketch of *Pride and Prejudice* was being written, one must remember that among men a tolerant contempt for the female sex was taken for granted. Lord Chesterfield would by no means have disapproved of *that*: it was a fact of life, to which he subscribed only too readily. 'Women,' he told his son, 'are only children of a larger growth: they have an entertaining tattle and sometimes wit; but for solid, reasoning good sense, I never in my life knew one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four and twenty hours together . . . A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humours and flatters them, as he does with a sprightly, forward child; but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with, serious matters; though he often makes them believe that he does both . . . No flattery is either too high or too low for them. They will greedily swallow the highest, and gratefully accept of the lowest; and you may safely flatter any woman, from her understanding down to the exquisite taste of her fan.'

Mr Darcy, one suspects, would have agreed with all that, until the teasing irony of Elizabeth, her sparkling wit and beautiful dark eyes began to disturb him. And her disapprobation of himself, too, which took him so much by surprise. *We* cannot be surprised by her reaction, for when, much against his own judgment, Darcy actually comes to the point of making her a proposal of marriage, he manages *again* to be so offensive as to leave one gasping. First, he walks about the room, and then, having spoken his proposal, leans casually against the mantelpiece while waiting for her reply. And the way he goes about it! 'He was not more eloquent,' Jane Austen tells us, 'on the subject of tenderness than of pride. His sense of her inferiority – of its being a degradation – of the family obstacles which judgment had

always opposed to inclination, were dwelt on with a warmth which seemed due to the consequence he was wounding, but was very unlikely to recommend his suit.' And when, the following day, he hands her a long letter, explaining his motive in persuading his friend Bingley out of his courthship of Jane Bennet, he cannot resist again stressing his offensive reasons. 'The situation of your mother's family,' he tells her, 'though objectionable' – she was the daughter, you remember, of a mere attorney – 'was nothing in comparison of that total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by herself' (that is, her mother), 'by your three younger sisters, and occasionally even by your father.' How *could* he expect her to accept his proposal, as he certainly did, for, as Jane Austen tells us, 'she could easily see that he had no doubt of a favourable answer.'

I think Lord Chesterfield would have been shocked by the whole style of the proposal, both by its offensiveness and by its outrageous snobbery. Chesterfield himself, oddly enough, considering his rank and the prevailing class prejudices of the period, was remarkably unsnobbish. 'None but fools,' he wrote towards the end of his life, 'are proud of their birth or rank.' And in an earlier letter, 'The characteristic of a well-bred man is, to converse with his inferiors without insolence, and with his superiors with respect and with ease.' And on another occasion, 'Any man who glories in his high birth and despises those whom he calls "nobodies" is the stupidest and most ridiculous animal on earth.'

Fortunately, Darcy was not as stupid as his aunt, Lady Catherine, who on the eventual announcement of his engagement to Elizabeth Bennet, 'sent him language so very abusive, especially of Elizabeth, that for some time all intercourse was at an end.' That must have been a pleasant interlude indeed, and since we are sure that Elizabeth's high spirits and teasing were extremely good for Darcy after their marriage, one ends the story without a doubt in the world of their being happy.

I have read, in one of the many critical studies of Jane Austen, that Lady Catherine is an 'outrageous caricature'. G.B. Stern, I remember, dismisses her as one of Jane Austen's failures. With that I can't agree. She was very much of the eighteenth century, when status, authority and wealth could make monsters of many people. Chesterfield, of course, would have laughed at her as much as we do, but diplomatically, in her company, would have been polite. 'Young men,' he told his son, 'are too apt to show a dislike, not to say an aversion and contempt, for ugly and old women, which is both impolitic and injudicious; for there is a respectful politeness due to the whole sex. Besides, the ugly and the old, having the least to do themselves, are jealous of being despised, and never forgive it; and I could suppose cases, in which you would desire their friendship, or at least their neutrality. Let it be a rule with you never to show that contempt

which very often you will have, and with reason, for a human creature. An injury is sooner pardoned than an insult.'

Darcy, clearly, had the sense to follow this advice in the matter of his offensive aunt, since at length, by Elizabeth's persuasion, 'he was prevailed on to overlook the offence, and seek a reconciliation; and after a little further resistance on the part of his aunt, *her* resentment gave way . . . and she condescended to wait on them at Pemberley.' What an improvement Elizabeth must have made in the atmosphere of that desirable estate in Derbyshire! One can see Darcy's manners improving to everyone, even to those he considered beneath him, and one has no doubt at all of their being reasonably happy. If Lord Chesterfield had lived long enough to read *Pride and Prejudice* I am sure he would have applauded.

Now, if I have not already taken up too much of your time in these considerations I would like to glance briefly at two examples of manners, or habits, in *Pride and Prejudice* that continue to puzzle me. They are both to do with walking. The first is the apparent habit of young ladies of deciding to walk about the room in which their friends are sitting, engaged in conversation. You remember the occasion at Netherfield, when Bingley is discussing his plans to give a ball. 'Miss Bingley made no answer, and soon afterwards got up and walked about the room. Her figure was elegant, and she walked well; but Darcy, at whom it was all aimed, was inflexibly studious. In the desperation of her feelings, she resolved on one effort more, and, turning to Elizabeth, said:

"Miss Eliza Bennet, let me persuade you to follow my example and take a turn about the room. I assure you it is very refreshing after sitting so long in one attitude." Elizabeth was surprised, but agreed to it immediately.'

Of course I know that the rooms of great houses were much larger than the ones that most of us inhabit nowadays, but even so, even at Netherfield, it sounds a tiresome procedure. The really stately homes, of course, had their long galleries, with portraits and bookshelves on one side and windows on the other, where one could walk for a little exercise in wet weather, but in more ordinary homes, in a room where some are sitting in conversation and others are reading, it sounds a most inconvenient habit. Nevertheless, 'taking a turn about the room' crops up more than once, and Darcy may have been right in supposing that young ladies usually did it in order to whisper together, or to call attention to their figures. I'm not at all sure that Lord Chesterfield would have approved of it.

The other little oddity is the manner of walking as 'exercise.' Elizabeth, as we know, tends to run everywhere, whether it is out of the room, or on parting from her friends out of doors, or 'crossing field after field at a quick pace, jumping over stiles and springing over

puddles with impatient activity,' for the whole of the three miles between Meryton and Netherfield. But walking, as performed by all the other ladies and gentlemen, seems to be a kind of slow saunter, which can hardly be described as 'exercise'. If there is a gentleman present, he will offer his arm to a lady, and they will walk interlocked, which must make it a very slow business. And if two ladies together meet a gentleman, he will take one on each arm, as Mr Darcy is obliged to do with the sisters Mrs Hurst and Miss Bingley. Elizabeth is there also, but the path is not wide enough for more than three, and in any case Darcy has only two arms, so Elizabeth runs off gaily, leaving the trio to what must have been a very slow stroll. Yet this kind of thing was what was called 'exercise', and it strikes one how very rarely one sees a lady and gentleman walking arm-in-arm nowadays. It would seem as odd today, perhaps, as a panting jogger would have seemed on the roads around Meryton or Longbourn.

But then everyone today tends to be more serious about exercise than they were in Jane Austen's day. The very word, in those days, for a lady, meant strolling about in a long muslin gown and those delicate little Regency slippers – just as 'work' for a lady, meant sitting in a comfortable chair with a little needlework. What would they have thought of the athletic shoes and jogging-boots that we see today in every shoe-shop window? It reminds me of an expression of my grandmother's day, which less than a century ago was taken quite seriously. This was 'carriage exercise', which was genuinely considered as exercise, and consisted of being handed into a carriage and driven about in a park or on country roads, wearing gloves, bonnet and shawl, until one felt suitably fatigued and returned home again.

Well, this is perhaps a frivolous digression, and I don't remember that Lord Chesterfield anywhere gives advice on exercise for its own sake. But he does, on several occasions, emphasise to his son the importance of graceful performance in dancing. 'Dancing is of itself a very silly, trifling thing,' he writes to his boy, 'but it is one of those established follies to which people of sense are sometimes obliged to conform, and then they should be able to do it well.' And a few years later, he writes to young Philip, who is now in Paris, 'It seems ridiculous to tell you, but it is most certainly true, that your dancing master is at this time the man in all Europe of the greatest importance to you. You must dance well, in order to sit, stand and walk well; and you must do all these well, in order to please.'

I think both Elizabeth and Darcy would have agreed with that, and we know, from Sir William Lucas, that they were both good dancers. Sir William, you remember, handsomely complimented them on their performance at the Netherfield ball. 'I have been most highly gratified indeed, my dear sir. Such very superior dancing is not often seen. It is evident that you belong to the first circles.'

So, on that elegant note, we may leave the subject of Mr. Darcy's strange and unpredictable manners. Bingley and Wickham would both, of course, have delighted Lord Chesterfield by their persuasive social performance. The one is presented to us as a thoroughly likeable (though not strong-minded) man, the other as an irresistibly charming rogue. If Darcy had had half their good manners in the beginning, Elizabeth Bennet would have been in his arms before he had finished the first sentence of his proposal, and we would have been deprived of one of the most teasingly amusing novels in our whole literature.

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
Report for the Year 1985



David Garrick
after a sketch by Nathaniel Dance, 1771.
(*National Portrait Gallery*)

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1940 BY DOROTHY G. DARNELL)

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(Countess of Huntingdon)

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The Annual Subscription to the Jane Austen Society is £4,
and a single payment of £40 or more makes the donor a
Life Member. Anyone may join. Annual Subscriptions
are due on January 1st, and all new and old
members are asked to send their subscriptions
or donations to the Honorary Secretary.

Yield House
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Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Jane Austen Society

THE JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY

Report for the year 1985

Membership

There were 106 new members during the year, of whom 51 became Life Members, as did 11 old members. Membership now stands at 1618 individual members and 44 institutions.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1st January and that this Report is the only reminder that they will receive. The Hon. Secretary would much appreciate prompt payment of the £4 Annual Subscription and will gladly provide a Banker's Order Form.

Members resident abroad are asked to pay their subscriptions by means of a Bankers Draft in sterling.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chawton House, by kind permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 20th July. It was attended by almost 600 members and their guests. Miss Margaret Lane (Countess of Huntingdon), the President, presided. She asked that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting, having been printed in the Annual Report, be taken as read.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Annual Report. This was seconded by Mr R. Tatton-Brown, and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the accounts. He stated that the Society only remained solvent thanks to an annual gift of £500 from Mrs Michael Smiley's Charitable Trust.

The Hon. Secretary proposed that Life Membership be raised to £40, and the annual subscription to £4. This was seconded by Commander C. H. A. Harper, and carried.

The President thanked Mr T. E. Baileff, the Hon. Treasurer, for his work for the Society.

Lt Colonel W. P. Serocold proposed that Miss Margaret Lane be re-elected President, Lord David Cecil Vice-President, and Sir Hugh Smiley Chairman of the Society.

This was seconded by Mr J. Butler-Kearney and carried.

The President proposed the re-election of the committee en bloc.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. A. Walton Litz of Princeton University, who took as his subject, *Pride and Prejudice* : Domesticating the Daydream.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs Maggie Lane, seconded by Surgeon Commander P. S. Marshall, RN, and carried.

The President announced that Sir Hugh Smiley would retire as Hon. Secretary, after thirty two years, at the end of the year. He was

presented with a cheque on behalf of the Society.

The President closed the meeting by thanking Major and Mrs Knight for lending Chawton House once more.

Annual General Meeting 1986

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Chawton House, by kind permission of Major and Mrs Edward Knight, on Saturday 19th July, when the Speaker will be Professor G. H. Treitel, of All Souls College, Oxford.

Honorary Secretary

Sir Hugh Smiley has retired as Hon. Secretary, and has been succeeded by Mr A. G. C. Trollope, whose address is Yield House, Overton, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG25 3HT, telephone Basingstoke (0252) 770341.

Study and Research Group

In view of the considerable scholarly and research interest in Jane Austen and her times, it has been decided to set up a Study and Research Group which will act as a centre and clearing-house for information about Jane Austen research and studies, especially amongst University researchers and advanced students.

The Group does have a small library of Austen and associated materials and welcomes additions to this from any members who wish to find a good home for their books.

The Corresponding Secretary for the Group is Mr Brian Southam, 3 West Heath Drive, London NW11 7QG, England.

Jane Austen in Bath

Copies of 'Jane Austen in Bath', by Jean Freeman, can be obtained from: The Hon. Secretary.

Price: £1 (post free).

Collected Reports, 1966-1975

The second volume of Collected Reports is available from the Hon. Secretary, at £8.50, (post free).

The Jane Austen Memorial Trust

Mr Francis E. Carpenter, Chairman of the Trust, died in May and has been succeeded by his elder son Mr Thomas F. Carpenter, TD.

Lord David Cecil, C. H.

Apart from the members of the Jane Austen Society a wide circle, university, literary and of the Common Reader, will have been sad to hear of the death, on Jan 1, 1986, of Lord David Cecil. His eminent literary powers, as a critic and biographer, were directed chiefly towards nineteenth-century subjects; but though he was recognized as

an authority on Jane Austen since his delivery of the Clarke Lecture at Cambridge nearly half a century ago, he did not produce a book on her till 1978, when his "A Portrait of Jane Austen" gave, for the first time, an authoritative presentation of her as a member of the newly-emerging, vigorous middle class. He gave the Address at the Annual General Meeting three times and missed presiding on only two occasions during his Presidency from 1965 – 1983. He discharged the office in his own inimitable way, with a disregard for the conventions usually observed by the Chairman of a meeting, which so endeared him to those present. The Society will always remember him with affection and gratitude.

Elizabeth Jenkins

A Letter from David Garrick

Dear Sir,

The precise setting in time of 'Pride & Prejudice' being a matter of conjecture, it may be enlightening to consider a letter which the Manager of Drury Lane theatre wrote in 1767 to the Duchess of Portland. It is perhaps not generally known that MR. COLLINS enjoyed the good offices of another noble patroness immediately prior to his acquaintance with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. The letter reads as follows:

Madam,

I shall always be happy to obey your Grace's commands, but our company at present is so full, and all the parts disposed of, that I could not, without great injustice to those actors I have already engaged, employ the person you recommend.

I have given Mr. Collins the best advice in my power, and apprised him that I shall be ready at the end of the season to examine his qualifications for the stage.

If your Grace will permit me to speak my mind, I think he has the most unpromising aspect for an actor I ever saw. A small pair of unmeaning eyes stuck in a round unthinking face, are not the most desirable requisites for a hero, or a fine gentleman. However, I will give him a tryal, if he is unemployed at that time of the year, and if he can be of service to me or himself, I shall most certainly obey your Grace's commands.

I am, Madam,

Your Grace's most humble and obedient servant,

D. GARRICK

Oct. 29th, 1767

Alas, no Collins was subsequently listed as a member of the Drury Lane company. It is understandable that the subsequent incumbent of the living of Hunsford should have been silent regarding this little known episode.

Victor Lucas

WORDSWORTH AND JANE AUSTEN

Sir Edward Denham may or may not have been reflecting Jane Austen's own views when, in *Sanditon*, he told Charlotte Heywood that Wordsworth had 'the true soul of poetry'. But whatever Jane Austen really thought of Wordsworth, Wordsworth does not seem to have been much impressed by Jane Austen.

Sara Coleridge told her friend Emily Trevenen in 1834 that her father, S. T. Coleridge, and her uncle, Robert Southey, had an equally high opinion of Jane Austen's merits, 'but Mr. Wordsworth used to say that though he admitted that her novels were an admirable copy of life, he could not be interested in productions of that kind; unless the truth of nature were presented to him clarified, as it were, by the pervading light of imagination, it had scarce any attraction in his eyes'.

I cannot help feeling that if the poet had seriously studied Jane Austen's novels, he would have found himself in sympathy with at least one or two of her characters. Consider, for example, Wordsworth's charming sonnet, *Personal Talk*, published in 1807;

I am not one who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk, -
Of friends, who live within a daily walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight;
And, for my chance acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night,
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or Kettle whispering its faint under-song.

A man who thought along such lines should surely have a soft spot for John Knightley, that lover of quiet domestic comfort. He would have shared John's astonishment when Mr Weston, who because of an unexpected summons to town had been unable to accept a Hartfield dinner invitation, nevertheless appeared in the drawing-room later, having walked over from Randalls.

'That a man who might have spent his evening quietly at home after a day of business in London, should set off again, and walk half-a-mile to another man's house, for the sake of being in mixed company till bed-time, of finishing his day in the efforts of civility and the noise of numbers, was a circumstance to strike him deeply. A man who had been in motion since eight o'clock in the morning, and might have now been still, — who had been in more than one crowd, and



A Corner of Jane Austen's bedroom, Chawton

might have been alone! – Such a man, to quit the tranquillity and independence of his own fireside, and on the evening of a cold, sleety April day rush out again into the world!... John Knightley looked at him with amazement'. And so might Wordsworth have done.

Then does not the sonnet's concluding sestet suggest that Wordsworth would have had some fellow-feeling for Edmund Bertram on the night of the ball given by Sir Thomas at Mansfield Park, when Edmund comes to his cousin and says, 'I am worn out with civility, I have been talking incessantly all night, and have nothing to say. But with you, Fanny, there may be peace, you will not want to be talked to. Let us have the luxury of silence.'

What were some of the reasons for Wordsworth's indifference to Jane Austen? Let me turn to Wordsworth's great friend, William Hazlitt, for light on the subject. In his *Table-Talk* essay, 'On Genius and Common Sense', Hazlitt declared that Wordsworth was the greatest poet of his day only because he was the greatest egotist. 'He sits in the centre of his being, and there "enjoys bright day"'. He does not waste a thought on others. Whatever does not relate exclusively and wholly to himself is foreign to his views...He thrusts aside all other objects, all other interests, with scorn and impatience, that he may repose on his own being, that he may dig out the treasures contained in it, that he may unfold the precious stores of a mind forever brooding over itself...With the passions, the pursuits, and imagination of other men, he does not profess to sympathize.'

When the American essayist R. W. Emerson visited England in 1834 he made a special trip to Rydal Mount to see Wordsworth. They had a long talk, mainly about poetry, which Emerson later recalled in his essay 'English Traits: First Visit to England'. Emerson concluded his essay with this summing-up: 'Wordsworth honoured himself by his simple adherence to truth, and was very willing not to shine, but he surprised by the hard limit of his thought. To judge from a single conversation, he made the impression of a very narrow and very English mind. Off his own beat, his opinions were of no value...'. During his second visit to England in 1848, Emerson met Wordsworth again. While expressing admiration of Wordsworth's adherence to his poetic creed, Emerson decided that 'There are torpid places in his mind'.

It must have been in one of these torpid places that Jane Austen dwelled, and from which she was fated never to emerge.

Mary Corringham

Tom Lefroy and Jane Austen

In the late 1860s, when James-Edward Austen-Leigh was planning his *Memoir* of Jane Austen, he consulted his sisters, Anna Lefroy and Caroline Austen, for information relating to any romantic episodes in

Jane's life, and in particular to her flirtation with Tom Lefroy at Ashe Rectory in the winter of 1795-96. By the time of these enquiries, Tom had become the austere, venerable Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, head of a large family and the owner of a rich estate in Co. Longford.⁽¹⁾ In April 1869 Caroline wrote anxiously to her brother, maintaining that the flirtation had been brief, that Tom could not be said to have jilted Jane in favour of marrying for money elsewhere, and that any rumours to the contrary had been spread by another branch of the Lefroys, settled in York, who had their own reasons for disliking him; she would prefer that no mention of the episode be made in the *Memoir*, in view of the fact that Tom was still alive.⁽²⁾

However, only a few weeks after Caroline's letter, Tom died, aged 92, and almost immediately Anna Lefroy wrote to James-Edward's wife Emma, passing on just the kind of rumour that Caroline wished so much to stifle:

"Mrs. Austen Leigh
Bray Vicarage
Maidenhead

Southern Hill
Reading
May 24th [postmark 1869]

My dear Emma,

A few days ago I recd. a long letter from Tom Lefroy⁽³⁾ in the course of which he tells me of a conversation he had with his late Uncle last September [i.e., September 1868] on the subject of his early acquaintance with my Aunt Jane – I wish I were at liberty to copy verbatim, as I think Tom's own remarks rather amusing, but as the conversation was private he thinks it ought not to be made use of – in the way of publication I suppose – In reply I assured him he need have no fears of that sort, as, in the first place it was no part of the Memorialist's plan (as I *believed*) [Page 2] to enter upon those sort of particulars, & in the next that I am the only person who has any faith in the tradition – nor should I probably be an exception if I had not married into the family of Lefroy – *but* when I came to hear again & again, from those who were old enough to remember, how the Mother had disliked Tom Lefroy because he had behaved so ill to Jane Austen, with sometimes the additional weight of the Father's condemnation, what could I think *then*? Or what now except to give a verdict, as Tom himself expressed it "under mitigating circumstances" As – First, the youth of the Parties – secondly, that Mrs. Lefroy, charming woman as she was, & warm in her feelings, was also partial in [Page 3] her judgments – Thirdly – that for other causes, too long to enter upon, she not improbably set out with a prejudice against the Gentleman, & would have distrusted had there been no Jane Austen in the case.

"The one thing certain is, that to the last year of his life she was remembered as the object of his youthful admiration – They were within a short month of the same age. ... Believe me my dr. Emma yr. affect. Sister, J.A.E. Lefroy"⁽⁴⁾

Anna's opinions had obviously been formed from information given by her elder brothers-in-law, John Henry George and Christopher Edward Lefroy, who were 13 and 10 years of age respectively when their Irish cousin Tom had visited Ashe in 1795-96. She would also have heard more from her son-in-law, a member of that York branch of the family who, as Caroline said, had been at odds with the Lord Chief Justice in past years.

James-Edward then wrote direct to T. E. P. Lefroy, who cautiously confirmed that his uncle had admitted to a "boyish love" for Jane; and in the event only a very brief reference to the matter appeared in the *Memoir*.⁽⁵⁾ It may, however, be significant that Tom named his eldest daughter, born in 1802, Jane.

Deirdre Le Faye

(1) J. A. P. Lefroy: "Jane Austen's Irish Friend: Rt Hon. Thomas Langlois Lefroy 1776-1869", in *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London* XXIII (3), 1979, pp. 148-165.

(2) R. W. Chapman: *Jane Austen: Facts and Problems* (Oxford, 1949), pp. 57-58.

(3) Anna's son-in-law, Thomas Edward Preston Lefroy (1815-87), a nephew of the elder Tom Lefroy.

(4) This letter is owned by descendants of the Austen-Leighs, to whom the writer is deeply indebted for permission to study and publish it.

(5) *Facts and Problems*, p. 58.

Jane Austen and the Godmersham Children

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when Constance Hill was planning her biography of Jane Austen,⁽¹⁾ she and her sister Ellen visited both Hampshire and Kent, not only to make drawings of the buildings and places associated with Jane, but also to contact members of the Austen family and obtain information from their various documents.⁽²⁾ Miss Hill does not specify the source of the following anecdote, but it would seem the original informant must have been one of the nephews and nieces in question.

"She [i.e. Jane] is described as 'standing in one of the windows at Godmersham when awaiting the arrival of her brother Frank, and his newly-married wife, allaying the impatience of the little nephews and nieces, watching with her, by a poetical account of the bride and bridegroom's journey from Canterbury; the places they passed through, the drive through the park, and the arrival, at last, at the house.'" ⁽³⁾

Unfortunately the anecdote as it stands cannot be entirely accurate. It is quite correct that Jane's brother Captain Francis Austen married Mary Gibson at St Lawrence's, Ramsgate, on 24th July 1806, and that they arrived at Godmersham two days later for their honeymoon.⁽⁴⁾ However, from early July until mid-October 1806 Jane, Cassandra and Mrs Austen were busy travelling from Bath to Clifton, Adlestrop, Stoneleigh, Hamstal Ridware and so eventually back via Steventon to Southampton⁽⁵⁾ — indeed, none of the Austen

ladies visited Godmersham at all during that year. If some adult was waiting with the children in the window-bay, it may have been their uncle Henry Austen, who stayed at Godmersham from 14th July until 1st August 1806.⁽⁶⁾

Alternatively, the informant may have been right in remembering that it was Jane who did the talking, but wrong in identifying the occasion and date. It seems very probable that confusion had arisen in retrospect between Captain Francis Austen's honeymoon visit in 1806 and the visit of the younger sailor brother, Captain Charles Austen and his family, in 1813, at which latter time Jane most certainly was at Godmersham and anxiously awaiting his arrival, as her letter of 15th October 1813 to Cassandra shows:-

"They came last night at about 7. We had given them up, but I still expected them to come. Dessert was nearly over; — a better time for arriving than an hour & ½ earlier. They were late because they did not set out earlier & did not allow time enough. — Charles did not *aim* at more than reaching Sittingbourne by 3, which cd. not have brought them here by dinner time."⁽⁷⁾

This scene of a late arrival sounds far more likely to have been the occasion for impatient children requiring to be calmed by the conversation of a sympathetic aunt.

Deirdre Le Faye

(1) Constance Hill: *Jane Austen, her homes and her friends* (London, 1902).

(2) Hill, *op.cit.*, p. vii.

(3) Hill, *op.cit.*, pp. 199-200.

(4) Fanny Knight's diary for 1806.

(5) W. & R. A. Austen-Leigh: *Jane Austen, her Life and Letters* (London, 1913), pp. 194, 197.

R. A. Austen-Leigh: *Jane Austen and Southampton* (London, 1949), vi.

(6) Fanny Knight's diary for 1806.

(7) R. W. Chapman: *Jane Austen's Letters* (OUP, 1964), Letter No. 87 p. 352.

John Bond: A Source for William Larkins?

JA's solid success in the creation of the unseen William Larkins, Mr Knightley's bailiff in *Emma*, is due in part to her keen interest in a real-life one, John Bond, her father's bailiff at Steventon. The relationship between William Larkins and Mr Knightley in which the latter prefers his bailiff's company to either Jane Fairfax or a dance at the Crown Inn recalls JA's awareness of her father's pleasant hours with his bailiff. For example, in October 1798 she writes her sister at Godmersham that their father and "John Bond are now very happy together, for I have just heard the heavy steps of the latter along the passage." The outcome of such *tête à tête* in which Bond, similar in all probability to William Larkins in thinking "more of his master's profits than anything," was a growing prosperity on the Austen Glebe Farm. Mr Austen's "eagerness to show (his kinsmen) his



All Saints Church and Deane House

lands and his cattle and many other matters” testifies to Bond’s efficiency.

When John suffers from lack of vigor, JA writes to her sister: “John Bond begins to find himself grow old, which John Bonds ought not to do, and unequal to much hard work; and John himself is to have the care of the sheep.” Like Miss Bates whose long acquaintance with William Larkins is responsible for her calling her friend’s bailiff by his first name, so JA’s interest and concern directs her own similar use of “John.” Also her revelation may testify to the major role John played and continued to play in nurturing Mr. Austen’s Merino sheep, a relatively new Spanish breed noted for its fine wool.

When the Austens decide to remove to Bath, John Bond’s fate becomes crucial, much as the agitation Mr Knightley suffers in his dilemma in quitting Donwell for Hartfield. Emma sees one difficulty unprovided for: William Larkins would not like for Mr Knightley to move, and so she teasingly confides “You must get his consent before you ask mine.” Trying to reconcile her own idea of the Steventon move, JA turns her thoughts to Bond’s future. Evidently her sister had voiced concern over the prospects of the faithful bailiff, for JA teases: “You feel more for John Bond, than John Bond deserves.” Either to lighten her father’s burdens in removal from Hampshire where he had lived for over forty years, or perhaps to retain pride in his own worth, John had been professing “no doubt at all of getting a good place.” Whether he received many offers is a moot point; what is certain is that a neighbor, Mr Holder of nearby Ashe Park, desired his services. In grand style JA describes the affair:

Mr. Holder... was shut up for an hour with my father & James (her brother) in a most awful manner. — John Bond est a lui. — Mr. Holder was perfectly willing to take him on exactly the same terms with my father, & John seems exceedingly well satisfied. — The comfort of not changing his home is a very material one to him, and since such are his unnatural feelings his belonging to Mr. Holder is the everything needful.

Then in a rare divergence from her father, she shares her preference for a different fate for John: as bailiff of the tenant of Steventon Manor, Harry Digweed, who

if John had quitted Cheesedown (his home) would have been eager to engage him as Superintendent at Steventon, would have kept an horse for him to ride about on, would probably have supplied him with a more permanent home...

Had John known of JA’s vision, which must be expressed playfully,



Church of St Nicholas, Steventon

no doubt he would have gone with Digweed. He stays at Steventon with James Austen, who upon his father's retirement and death becomes Rector at St Nicholas.

Although separated from Bond in 1801, JA maintains an unbroken interest in him. At Southampton, for example, she writes Cassandra that with 1100 pounds a year their brother James in making considerable improvements at Steventon Rectory by trenching the garden "uses his own servants and John Bond" thereby saving himself some money. And in the very letter –29 June 1813– announcing the arrival of her "own darling child" from London (*Pride and Prejudice*) and in which she addresses herself to writing "something new" (*Mansfield Park*), she begins with "I hope you received my little parcel by J. Bond..." He remained the tie with her Steventon world.

The house sitting on the right side of Steventon Lane just behind Deane Gate Inn, formerly called Cheesedown, is a reminder of John Bond. The two-story, red-brick, hipped roof building, a late Victorian house built in this century, stands today without the land that surrounded it in JA's time. John's Cheesedown was so called because as part of the Oakley Estate, the home of the Bramstons where JA attended dances, it was an outlying farm supplying cheese to the estate. Like Cheesedown House, Oakley has undergone change, too, as Oakley Hall is now Hilsea College. From its rear, though, may be seen the estate's original dairy. Living at Cheesedown Farm John was engaged not only in cows but in pork, for it is well known that pigs are fattened on skim milk. It is well established that the pork-loving Austens secured their pigs from Cheesedown. With his dairy experience, John probably aided Mrs Austen with her "little Alderney" and with her "nice dairy fitted up with a bull and six cows" –and was partially responsible for her boast to an inlaw–"You must come, and, like Hezekiah, I will show (you) all my riches." John may also be seminal to the scene in *Emma* in which Harriet Smith speaks of Robert Martin's mother having "8 cows, two of them Alderneys and one a little Welch cow."

The Burial Registry of Steventon's St Nicholas Church records that John Bond died on February 22 in 1823 at the ripe age of 87! The entry is in the hand of JA's nephew William Knight, who had that year become rector of the Church and would serve for fifty years. JA's earlier concern for John's health then is well understood when we realize that he was at the time sixty-two years old and we are more impressed that at sixty-five he can save James Austen money in being able to trench his garden. The precise date of his birth is incapable of verification owing to the gap in the Birth Records of St Nicholas's Registry and the fact that the first civil birth registers were not mandated until 1837. He was buried in Steventon churchyard.

Two years after his death an entry in The Registry under “J. Davis curate Dean” reads: “Anne Bond Steventon Jan. 27 73.” Speculation has it that she was John’s wife. Although JA does not mention the existence of a wife, she does take note of Lizzie Bond (no doubt John’s daughter) who in 1798 had just been apprenticed to a dress maker, Miss Small. It may be this same Elizabeth who marries Joseph Beal at Overton in 1809. And JA’s prediction “we may hope to see her able to spoil gowns in a few years” may have become a reality.

Joyce Bown of Basset Farm, Steventon, scoured St Nicholas’ graveyard for me searching for John Bond’s grave but was unable to do so because of the toll erosion and time have taken upon the inscriptions of the tombs. Although the record of his birth is probably lost forever and his tomb is unlocatable, and although Cheesedown has no antiquities recorded in the local studies section of the county library, and the house formerly identified is now separated, nameless, from Steventon Lane by a wooden fence, John Bond’s memory remains forever fresh in his influence on Jane Austen as immortalized in her letters and novels.

In commenting, for example, on a new cloak, she tells Cassandra “I like it very much, & can now exclaim with delight, like J. Bond at Hay Harvest ‘This is what I have been looking for these three years!’” And in telling her sister of a new governess for Edward’s children at Godmersham she exclaims, “Miss Clewes seems the very governess they have been looking for these ten years – longer coming than J. Bond’s last shock of corn.” And we can hear echoes in *Sense and Sensibility* when Mrs Jennings in visiting Eleanor and Edward in the newly renovated parsonage, thinks “They had, in fact, nothing to wish for but the marriage of Colonel Brandon and Marianne, and rather better pasturage for their cows!”

Like Mr Knightley contemplating the move from Donwell who had been walking away from William Larkins the whole morning to have his thoughts to himself and who can admonish Emma “You laugh at me about William Larkins, but I could quite as ill spare Robert Martin”, JA could ill have spared John Bond who provided her with much amusement and delightful tropes.

D. Dean Cantrell

William Walter

An investigation by Gilbert Hoole & William Jarvis

William Walter, identified in the Austen-Leigh pedigrees as M. D. of Frant, was the first husband of Rebecca Hampson of Gloucester, who subsequently married William Austen, surgeon, of Tonbridge, Jane’s grandfather.

Her son by her first marriage, William Hampson Walter, was on intimate terms with his half-brother George Austen, despite a ten-years difference in age, and their wives corresponded regularly. It is this close relationship that has made researchers on the fringes of the Austen family history wish to know more about William Walter than the meagre details of the pedigree; even his Christian name, which some authorities give as James, has been in question. The parish records of Frant, a Sussex village bordering on Tunbridge Wells, are no help, but other sources have now been found.

In the Kent Archives at Maidstone are two leases of 1743 granted by William Hampson Walter, one as an executor and trustee of the will of his stepfather, William Austen, the other as his own father's heir. In each document he identifies himself as the son of William Walter of the City of Gloucester, Esq: there is no mention of Frant, nor of any medical qualification. The registers of St Michael's Church, Gloucester, record the baptism on August 21st 1721, of William Hampson, the son of William Walter, Gent, by Rebecca (sic) his wife and in the Burial register for May 30th 1726 is an entry for William Walter, Doctor of Fisick. The first entry clearly refers to our man and the second is highly probable, confirming at least some medical pretension. The date of death allows a decent interval before his widow remarried. We do not know the date of this marriage, but Hampson, the eldest child of George and Rebecca Austen, was born on September 13th 1728.

In the second of the two leases mentioned above William Hampson Walter gives this further information about his father, that he was the son of George Walter of New Trench in the parish of Tonbridge. The Trench is a sunken road in the north of the old parish of Tonbridge and there seems to have been more than one family named Walter in the area: the multiplicity of entries under that name in the registers and the loss of several pages in the later 17th century makes identification difficult.

William, the eldest surviving son of George & Sarah Walter, was baptised on January 4th 1696/97 and in a later entry George is proudly described as Yeoman of the Trench. The boy is clearly identified as being at Tonbridge School 1706 - 1714 and as matriculating at St John's College, Oxford, aged 17. He held a Smythe Exhibition from the School, an award later gained by two of his grandsons. After 1714 the trail becomes confused. He seems to have migrated to New Inn Hall, later absorbed into Balliol College, whence he graduated BA in 1717. but Foster's Alumni is mistaken in saying "perhaps rector of Cranham, Essex 1733." That proves to be another William Walter. Did our man study medicine at Oxford or elsewhere? Did he go to Gloucester as assistant to Sir George Hampson, Bart, MD whose daughter he married? Did he ever practise at Frant? If he did, it could only have been very briefly. And how was

William Austen able to meet and win the widowed Rebecca? It seems likely that she came from Gloucester with her small son to her late husband's home in Tonbridge, where his mother, long widowed and having lost three, perhaps four, sons in infancy, must surely have welcomed her grandson. There was, too, some property here belonging to William Walter, which he had inherited from Elizabeth Walter, possibly his aunt, in 1719. We do not know the extent of the legacy, which, perhaps, had enabled William Walter to marry comparatively young, but Elizabeth must have been a person of substance for she was buried in the chancel of Tonbridge Church. She is described as the widow of William Walter, formerly of Upper Trench, the house where William Hampson Walter later lived for many years and where his grandfather George had died in 1703

Notes on Auction Sales 1984-85

A *Manuscripts &c.* Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, sold as Lot 723 on 12 December 1984 the autograph manuscript of Jane Austen's letter to Cassandra from Chawton, 4 September 1816 (No. 132 in Dr Chapman's edition) for \$7,000. At Sotheby's in London on 17/18 December 1984 Lot 790 was a pen and ink drawing by Hugh Thomson, the original of the illustration captioned 'Walking away from William Larkins' which appears on p. 404 of the 1896 Macmillan edition of *Emma*; this sold for £550.

B *First and early editions* At Sotheby's on 6/7 December 1984 Lot 85 comprised a set of early editions in uniform early 19th century half green calf gilt, consisting of first editions of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma* and *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* and second editions of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Mansfield Park*, with half-titles present only in Vols. 1-3 of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion*; the set sold for £3,800.

A first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* 1811 was Lot 25 at Christie's, New York, on 16 November 1984, from the library of Doris L. Benz, complete with half-titles and final blanks, bound in contemporary half calf and marbled boards, worn, in a gilt blue morocco solander case, with bookplates of Sir John Stanley and Cortlandt F. Bishop; it fetched \$4,800 (having been sold previously in New York in 1938 in the Bishop sale for \$230). Another copy was Lot 61 at Sotheby's on 22 July 1985 (no half-titles or final blanks, signature of W. Lloyd on titlepages, early 19th century half calf, worn), and sold for £1,400.

A first edition of *Pride and Prejudice* 1813 appeared as Lot 65 at Christie's on 19 September 1984 (contemporary half calf, no half-titles) and sold for £700. Another copy, from the library of Paul Francis Webster, was Lot 1 at Sotheby's, New York on 24 April 1985 (contemporary half green straight-grain morocco, gilt, some wear,

with half-titles – those to Vols. 1 and 2 being supplied from another copy –, contemporary signature of John Need on titlepages, in a brown morocco-backed folding box) and sold for \$2,500. A third copy was Lot 62 at Sotheby's on 22 July 1985 (no half-titles, early 19th century half calf, with signature of W. Lloyd on titlepages), selling for £1,400.

Iris Murdoch's copy of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* 1814 (no half-titles or advertisement leaf, 19th-century calf, worn) was Lot 63 in the 22 July sale at Sotheby's, and fetched £450. Joyce Cary's copy of the second edition, 1816, of the same novel, Lot 1031 at Sotheby's on 19 February 1985 (no half-titles, contemporary half calf) sold for £160, while a curious copy having the text of the second edition and half-titles and titlepages apparently of the first edition (but presumably facsimiles) in a modern full calf binding by Bayntun of Bath, lotted with first and second editions of James Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir*, 1870 and 1871, both in original cloth, Lot 63 at Christie's on 19 September 1984, sold for £300.

A first edition of *Emma* 1816 was Lot 62 in the same Christie's sale (no half-titles, contemporary polished calf, bookplate of Henry Charles Beeching) and sold for £500, while Iris Murdoch's copy, Lot 64 at Sotheby's on 22 July 1985 (no half-titles, 19th-century calf, worn) brought £750.

Finally, a first edition of *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* 1818 was Lot 64 at Christie's on 19 September 1984 (no half-titles, contemporary half calf rebaked, bookplate of Charles Pott) and sold for £400 ; Iris Murdoch's copy of the same novel, with half-title in vol. 1 only, 19th-century calf, worn, Lot 65 at Sotheby's on 22 July 1985, brought £150.

David Gilson

Jane Austen Studies, 1985

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David Gilson

Ozias Humphry and the Austens of Sevenoaks

Ozias Humphry (1742-1809) and Francis Austen (1698-1791) were connected by one crucial factor – both enjoyed the patronage of John Frederick Sackville, the third Duke of Dorset (1745-1799).

The Devonshire artist had worked for the Duke, a great collector, throughout his career. Starting off by painting numerous miniatures for the family in the 1770s, as his eyesight became progressively worse, he turned to producing works in oil for the Knole collection in the 1780s, and finally in 1791, his first-ever crayon picture was a portrait of the Duke, who in grateful recognition of his services, the following year obtained for him the position of Portrait Painter in crayons to his Majesty George III.

This was but one of a series of favours conferred upon the artist, who like Francis Austen, regarded his patron as meal-ticket both for himself and his relatives. Thus in 1770, we find him writing a succession of letters to the Duke, reminding him of a promise to grant the living of Kemsing and Seal to his brother, the Rev. William Humphry. In August of the same year he received a terse reply from Rome, advising him that Dukes never forget, and suggesting that a certain impecunious dependant would do well to mind both his manners and his patron. Having suitably reprimanded the artist, the Duke then complied with his request.

William Humphry (1744-1816) became vicar of Kemsing and Seal and subsequently rector of Birling, Kent, a second presentation from the Sackvilles. In 1778 he consolidated his Kentish connections by marrying Elizabeth Woodgate, a member of an important local family, the Woodgates of Stonewall Park and Summerhill, the alliance delighting Ozias, who was inordinately proud of his own heritage and as such prone to both fiscal and family snobbery. William became a respected figure in Sevenoaks and throughout his life maintained a close connection with the family at Knole, using it to the best personal and fraternal advantage.

Thus Francis, Ozias and William all shared the same patron and as agent to Knole, in charge of many of the Duke's daily affairs, Francis was in regular contact with both of them. Their acquaintance is confirmed by several letters in the Ozias Humphry collection at the

Royal Academy, in which William makes passing reference to 'Mr. Austen', and assumes a tangible form with Ozias Humphry's portrait Francis Austen, painted 1780/81, now in the Sheffield Art Gallery.

In 1780 the Duke decided that he wanted a portrait of his loyal servant to hang in the collection at Knole, and on the 11th of July Francis wrote to Ozias in order to arrange the sitting.

'11 Jul 1780 Sevenoake

The Duke of Dorset does me great honour in wishing to have my picture and as tis to be your hand I feel myself very happy with the thought of its being in his Grace Collection and will 'sns't'(illeg.) myself to 'es't(illeg.) to you when soon twill be convenient for yourself I mean after this week as I return home from Maidstone on friday or Saturday and don't know any particular engagements that will interfere.

I shall have company at my house on Monday – but not till about or near dining time and know of no other engagements.

I am, Dear Sir, Yr most Obedt Servt
F. K. Austen'

The tone of the letter conveys a previous acquaintance, the continuation of which is attested to by a subsequent codicil written by the artist in pencil, on the back of the letter: (Francis Austen) 'died aged 96 at Sevenoaks'.

Ozias came to Sevenoaks and painted the picture, but either he made two copies of it, or else, the work for some reason or other did not go to Knole, for when Jane's brother Henry Austen (1771-1850) visited his Uncle in 1780, the picture was hanging over the mantle-piece, as recalled many years later in an undated letter written to his nephew Rev. James Edward Austen-Leigh (1798-1874):

'All I remember of him is that he wore a wig like a Bishop, and a suit of light gray, ditto, coat, vest and hose. In his picture over the chimney the coat and vest had a narrow gold lace edging, about half an inch broad, but in my day he had laid aside the gold edging, though he retained a perfect identity of colour, texture and make to his life's end –'

Another reference to the portrait occurs in a somewhat mercenary list, compiled by the artist in 1792, and entitled: 'A rude statement of the advantages I have derived from my connection with the Duke of Dorset.' Amidst various accounts for pictures and miniatures, comes the single line: 'Francis Austin (sic) or Mrs Bates £26 4s 0d' (6) (Mrs Sarah Bates was an actress and singer (ob.1811) and her portrait was painted for the collection at Knole.)

The connections between the Austens and the Humphrys did not

cease with the picture. William and Elizabeth Humphry had seven children, including three daughters: Mary Anne, Frances and Juliana, known as Marianne, Fanny and Julia, by coincidence the latter two names are used in *Mansfield Park*.

Like Jane and Cassandra, the three daughters played an active part in local society and when apart, wrote long letters full of the latest gossip. These letters are full of references to the Austens. They attended parties at the Sackville Austens (Francis' second son named after the family at Knole), wrote in praise of Francis Motley's militia activities and grieved over the death of the Rev. Henry Austen in 1807 (son of Francis Austen's brother Thomas). By the latter, the two families were actually connected by marriage, since Henry Austen had married Mary Hooker, sister in law to Mr Woodgate, Elizabeth Humphry's eldest brother.

There was speculation that the two families might have been more closely connected, when Col. Thomas Austen M.P., began paying attentions to Anne Woodgate of Riverhill. But if, as Fanny believed, marriage was at some stage in the air, there unfortunately it was to stay. The sisters' letters begin to carry an increasing number of references to the charming Miss Manning, daughter of William Manning M.P. of Combe Bank (another important local family), and sister to the famous Cardinal. With somewhat rueful admiration, Marianne and Fanny, (who were both to remain unmarried) recount the gradual emergence of this daunting female, who combined youth and beauty with wit and wealth. In 1826, barely a year after the death of his first wife, Col. Thomas Austen married Caroline Manning, the belle of the ball having captured one of the most eligible men of the county.

It is with Thomas Austen (1775-1859) that we have the first provenance of the picture, as reported in Dr. Bloxham's letter of 1880. Considering the proven relationship between the Austens and the Humphrys, it seems hardly surprising that amongst their acquaintances, they also numbered the Bloxham family.

The Humphrys and the Austens were connected initially by the patronage of the Duke of Dorset, and subsequently by Sevenoaks society. Ozias was frequently drawn in to this social world, staying either at Knole or with his brother and participating enthusiastically in important local events, such as the annual cricket match. William sought to establish his brother as portrait painter to the local dignitaries, obtaining him various commissions, including several portraits of the Woodgate family. Taking all these facts into consideration, it is more than likely that at some stage the two brothers would have sought the patronage of Ozias' former subject, Francis Austen.

If their efforts did indeed result in the painting of the much disputed portrait of Jane Austen, a possible inspiration for the commis-

sion lies in a strange coincidence, that provides another albeit indirect link between the two families.

One of Ozias Humphry's greatest friends was George Romney (1734 – 1802). They had travelled around Italy together (1772-77) and both met and corresponded frequently throughout their lives. But a few months after Ozias had completed his picture of Francis Austen, Romney was given the commission to paint Jane's other rich uncle, Thomas Knight of Chawton and Godmersham (1735-1794) and his wife Catherine. The sittings lasted from April 1781, to June 1782, and it seems probable that the portrait of Edward Austen (1767-1852) was painted by the artist at some time during this period.

The two artists were conjoined in friendship, their two patrons related in blood. Whilst one commission need not have inspired the other, they would almost certainly have been known about by both parties. Furthermore, a spirit of friendly competition in regard to their impoverished relations, seems to have existed between the two uncles. When Thomas presented George Austen with Steventon, Francis countered with the presentation of Deane, and whilst the Knights adopted Edward, Mrs Austen II became godmother to Jane.

Could the portrait be a further example of this benevolent one-upmanship? At present one can only speculate, but if the portrait is indeed of Jane, it would provide a possible explanation.

Madeleine Marsh

The Portrait

The first official provenance of the portrait comes in a letter written by Thomas Harding Newman (1811-81) to Dr J. R. Bloxam (1807-1891), dated December the 30th, 1880.

Nelmes.

'I should like to give another painting of Jane Austen, the novelist by Zoffany to her relative, your neighbour Morland Rice. It is of a girl about fifteen, and came into my family the gift of Col. Austen of Kippington to my mother-in-law, or rather stepmother, my father's second wife, who was a great admirer of the novelist. I can remember Col. Austen visiting this place. Latterly when at Brampton I have failed to talk with my old friend. I don't think he can have forgotten me. I was at Oxford when he knocked his head against a post, and ascertained that the post was the harder of the two.'

The Revd Dr Thomas Harding Newman belonged to an old Essex family. His father was also Thomas Harding Newman (b. 1779) of Nelmes, Hornchurch, Essex, who in 1810 had married Harriet Cartwright of Ixworth Abbey, Suffolk. She died in 1815, probably from exhaustion after having borne him four children, of whom



Edward Austen (later Knight)
from the portrait by George Romney
(Mr Henry Rice)

Thomas was the eldest. He then married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Hall of Hollybush, Staffordshire. She died in 1831 and left the picture to her step-son.

Dr Newman became Dean of Magdalen College, Oxford, where he met John Morland Rice (1823-1897) and Dr. Bloxam (1807-1891) Fellow of Magdalen and College Librarian.

Ever since it emerged, the picture has been the cause of considerable dissent, the objections to its being a portrait of Jane Austen summarised in an article published by the Jane Austen Society in 1973.

First, as they (the committee) think, of decisive importance, is the evidence of the dress. Secondly, the possible and even probable confusion ... of Jane Austen with her cousin Jane, the daughter of Thomas Motley Austen. The Austen race produced a very strong family likeness, and ... it seems allowable to think that the picture of one little girl might well be mistaken for that of another, especially as both were called Jane Austen. Thirdly,... the genuine but unfounded conviction held by families of a distinguished person, that a picture or relic in their possession represents or was owned by that person.' Report for 1973 – p.12-13

These objections are far from conclusive, and are best answered individually.

1 *The Dress*

The article claims that in 1790, 'the hair was made to look voluminous and generally curly' and that short, cropped hair with a fringe was not fashionable until some years later. This charge can be refuted by several contemporary pictures. In 1780, Ozias Humphry includes in his picture of the *Berkely and Granard families*, a little girl with short hair and a fringe. The same style is worn by Reynolds' *Miss Crew* (c. 1775) and by the children in the portrait chosen to illustrate the 1780s in *A History of Fashion* by J. Anderson Black and M. Garland (London, 1975).

Taking the year of the portrait as c. 1790, the report concludes that the style of dress post-dates this period, thus the picture must be 19th-century and as such not of Jane. In the book illustration, however, the children wear white dresses, the material puffed to the elbow and banded at the bottom, whilst the dress of the youngest child is high-waisted. In her monograph on children's fashion (1930), Iris Brooke describes how between 1775 and 1795 the long-skirted dress gave way to the 'short empire frock of childish simplicity', high in the waist, the skirt raised above the ankles to show heel-less dancing pumps. Her description tallies with the dress in the portrait. The simple styles worn by children during this period anticipated the clothes adopted

subsequently and reflects not so much adult fashion, as the youth of the sitter. As ever, the last word should be left to Jane Austen. In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny, the poor relation, is given a new dress by her kind and wealthy uncle:

“The new dress that my uncle was so good as to give me on my cousin’s marriage. I hope it is not too fine...”

“A woman can never be too fine while she is all in white. No, I see no finery about you... Your gown seems very pretty. I like these glossy spots...”

2 *Jane Campion* (née Austen, 1776-1857)

Constance Pilgrim refutes this suggestion in the annual report of 1974, quoting from a letter written by Patrick Rice:

“It seems to me that the idea that the girl is the other Jane (Jane Motley) of the Austen family is unacceptable on two counts: first because we are told that this particular Jane actually died in 1797 and may therefore be presumed to have been at least in her twenties in the period to which the dress in the portrait is assumed by the experts to belong. In other words, we can’t have it both ways: If the fashion of the dress precludes the one girl, it also disposes of the other, and also because, whatever confusion in the identity of the two cousins may have arisen at a later date, it is hardly conceivable that Col. Austen who gave the picture to Dr Newman’s stepmother, could have made this mistake, if his own sister, the other Jane in the story, had really been its subject.”

To this we can also add that at the time he gave Mrs Newman the picture, his sister was alive, making it still more unlikely that he would make a mistake respecting the identity of the sitter.

3 ‘*A genuine but unfounded conviction*’

Leaving aside the question of whether one can discount family tradition entirely, this specific ‘conviction’ is not without foundation.

We know that the portrait was commissioned either by Francis Austen or Francis Motley, and we have shown why it cannot be of Jane Campion.

We have demonstrated Francis Austen’s generosity to his nephew, in his perhaps somewhat competitive role as kind uncle to the poor Austen relations.

Discounting Zoffany as having no connection with either the family or the style of the portrait, we have established the link between Ozias Humphry and Francis Austen, and proven that their relationship extended beyond the portrait painted in 1780.

We know that Jane visited her uncle in July 1788, the visit described by her second half-cousin, Philadelphia Walters in a letter to Elizabeth de Feuillide:

‘Yesterday I began an acquaintance with my female cousins, Austens. My uncle, aunt, Cassandra and Jane arrived at Mr F. Austen’s the day before. We dined with them there... the youngest (Jane) is very like her brother Henry, not at all pretty and very prim, unlike a girl of twelve: but it is a hasty judgement which you will scold me for... Jane is whimsical and affected.

Ozias Humphry was also in the county at this period. He had spent several months working for the Duke at Knole, restoring the miniatures in the collection. He suffered increasingly from the failing eyesight that had turned him to oils, was to reduce him to pastels, and finally blinded him completely.

The girl in the portrait is definitely an Austen, with all the characteristic family features: dark hair, small mouth, round face and shadows under the eyes. She resembles Cassandra’s drawing of Jane (c.1801) not only in the aforementioned features, but in her rounded arms, the delicate neck set above sloping shoulders, the slight double chin, and the striking brown eyes emphasised by distinctively high eyebrows. Finally, the girl in the portrait seems to be about twelve or thirteen years old, the same age as Jane when she visited her uncle.

In style the picture reflects the work of Ozias Humphry. The face is far more successful than the hands, suggesting the authorship of a miniaturist, used to painting head and shoulders rather than full length portraits. The somewhat clumsy style is typical of his later works, when his hand grew looser as his eyes grew worse and his perception and use of colour were equally affected.

We have yet to find the final, ‘ocular proof’ linking the artist with the portrait, and proving the latter to be of the novelist. Circumstantial evidence, however, is growing increasingly strong, and leading us gradually in the direction of Ozias Humphry and Jane Austen.

Madeleine Marsh

The last two articles are reproduced through the courtesy of Mr Henry Rice, the owner of the portrait.

Pride and Prejudice: Domesticating the Daydream

Address Given at the Annual General Meeting

In David Lodge’s recent and wonderfully academic novel, *Small World*, the ambitious and brash American literary critic Morris Zapp identifies himself in this way:

I think I can say in all modesty I was *the* Jane Austen man. I wrote five books on Jane Austen . . . the aim of which was to be utterly exhaustive, to examine the novels from every conceivable angle — historical, biographical,

rhetorical, mythical, structural, Freudian, Jungian, Marxist, existentialist, Ctian, allegorical, ethical, phenomenological, archetypal, you name it. So that when each commentary was written, there would be *nothing further to say* about the novel in question.

Even if we know nothing about Professor Zapp from his earlier appearance in Lodge's novel *Changing Places*, we know a great deal about him at the end of this Polonius-like recital of critical fashions. What Lodge is playing on is our natural feeling – backed by the critical tradition – that of all great writers Jane Austen is the most resistant to critical dogmatism and the extremes of literary interpretation. This is part of what Virginia Woolf meant when she said that Jane Austen was the most difficult of all writers to “catch in the act of greatness.” As one of the editors of a forthcoming Companion to Jane Austen, I recently had occasion to re-read much of the major criticism, from Scott to the 1980's, and I was struck by two things: *First*, how difficult it is to say anything startlingly new about her art (most modern criticism plays variations on themes uncovered by her nineteenth-century critics). And *second*, how inaccessible her art is to the special and arcane vocabularies of literary criticism. I think this is one reason why the best professional scholars writing on her work have always kept a general audience in view, and why some of the most perceptive criticism has been produced by men and women working outside the academic establishment. Richard Simpson, whose review of the 1870 *Memoir* is the finest piece of nineteenth-century criticism, was a composer, a tireless polemicist on Roman Catholic issues, and – like so many of Jane Austen's best critics – a Shakespeare scholar. Reginald Farrer, whose 1917 anniversary essay anticipated many of the trends in later criticism, was best known for his works on botany and English gardens. And although academic study of Jane Austen has flourished in recent years (David Gilson's splendid *Bibliography* lists more studies for the years 1954-78 than for all the years between 1813 and 1954), some of the very best writing continues to come from outside the academy. Jane Austen does indeed seem to be a special case among English writers, and this is understood when we think of the unusual stability of her reputation. As Edmund Wilson once said, in the many revolutions of taste that have occurred over the past century and a half “perhaps only two reputations have never been affected by the shifts of fashion: Shakespeare's and Jane Austen's. We still agree with Scott about Jane Austen, just as we agree with Ben Jonson about Shakespeare.” There is, of course, the famous list of detractors and anti-Janeites (I don't have to call the roll before this audience); but in almost every instance the adverse judgement reveals limitations or eccentricities of the critic, leaving Jane Austen untouched. As John Bayley once remarked, the depreciators of Jane Austen seem to be driven by a deep psychological need. She gets under their skin: in reading her they discover something about their own

outlook on life that makes it urgently necessary to depreciate *hers*.

All this unanimity of judgment and breadth of appeal would seem to leave us in a most enviable position as admirers of a writer whose art is normative and serene, beyond the reach of what Henry James called "the critical spirit." But I do not think many of us are comfortable with that complacent assumption. Looking again the other day at Douglas Bush's famous parody of archetypal and psychoanalytic criticism, "Mrs. Bennet and the Dark Gods", I was struck by its complacency and easy cynicism: by using Jane Austen as his absurd example, Bush avoided a great many difficult questions. The same evasive method can be found in the earlier critics who compared Jane Austen to Shakespeare. They bracketed her with Shakespeare because they rightly found in her fiction the same talent for creating believable characters through probable action, the same genius for producing a complete imaginative world — but they also welcomed the comparison because it put so many hard critical questions out of reach. As with Shakespeare, the apparent gap between Jane Austen's life and her art was so startling that it defied explanation, and led to the easy formula "natural genius." The critics of our own century, denied this convenient means of escape, have talked obsessively about the problem of "scale," speculating on what Jane Austen's work would have been like if she had not confined herself to what she called, half ironically, "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory." Most readers have argued that her limited range is the direct source of her power, that she is the supreme "classical" writer who deliberately confines herself — in André Gide's words — to "an exquisite mastery of that which can be mastered." But others, like Virginia Woolf, have tried to imagine what Jane Austen would have been like if she had lived a different life, or lived "a few more years only" and found new areas of experience.

She would have stayed in London [Virginia Woolf speculated], dined out, lunched out, met famous people, made new friends, read, travelled, and carried back to the quiet country cottage a hoard of observations to feast upon at leisure... She would have devised a method, clear and composed as ever, but deeper and more suggestive, for conveying not only what people say, but what they left unsaid; not only what they are, but what life is. She would have stood farther away from her characters, and seen them more as a group, less as individuals. Her satire, while it played less incessantly, would have been more stringent and severe. She would have been the forerunner of Henry James and of Proust...

More recently Angus Wilson, taking these remarks by Virginia Woolf as his text, has argued that Jane Austen's limited range of artistic concerns was a "deforming one; it distorted the balance between the two views of life whose conflict made her art" (call them, for convenience, sense and sensibility), and led to the curious critical

process of "proclaiming aloud her small world and at the same time nudging her into the ranks of the very few greatest masters of the novel."

Virginia Woolf's vision of that other, Bloomsbury Jane Austen, urban and urbane, strikes me as simply an exercise in idealized self-portraiture; but Angus Wilson's objections are more serious and point up some persistent difficulties in talking about Jane Austen, especially the problem of "scale."

One explanation of Jane Austen's successful escape from the charge of being a miniaturist lies in the special reality of her created world. Of course, the worlds of Dickens and Henry James are *real*, but the authors never allow us to forget that these worlds are also powerful fictions. Even when James arranged for actual photographs to document the "reality" of his art (I'm thinking of the Coburn photographs that illustrate the New York Edition), those photographs were deliberately stylized to look like the art of his day. When we read books called "The World of Dickens" or "The World of Henry James" we know that we are reading about the cultural realities that underlie their fictions, yet we are constantly aware of a gap, a quantum jump, between life and art. The world of Victorian England and the world of Dickens's novels are closely related, but not quite the same. On the one hand, that ideal book called "The World of Jane Austen" would be simultaneously a description of the world she lived in and the world of her novels, the two indistinguishable. In reading Jane Austen we feel that there can be no other world for her than the one she writes about: it is the only world, until we close the pages of her novels. It has a solidity and presence unequalled in English fiction.

I suppose what this means is that Jane Austen managed, on her "little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory," to trace a small part of that universal arc of human experience that we find in Shakespeare's plays. But some other writers, with far less stable reputations, have done the same thing, so we have to look elsewhere for the special qualities that have made Jane Austen's detractors seem eccentric and ungenerous. Among these qualities I would single out Jane Austen's talent for dramatizing both the *probable* and the *possible*, both the limitations of human life and the illusion that these limitations can be occasionally overcome by those who are lucky enough and skilful enough. In other words, Jane Austen — like Mozart — shows from time to time life itself can take on the order and harmony of a work of art. She satisfies our secret longing to believe that those who are good and generous are also stylish and beautiful; that the quality of one's life and the style of one's life can, from time to time, be the same thing. And she does this without violating in any way our sense of reality. We have to remember that she inherited both the tradition of

the Novel and Romance: the novel, with its emphasis on domestic reality and scrupulous detail – the romance, with its emphasis on ideal patterns and perfect forms. In his early review of *Emma* Sir Walter Scott praised Jane Austen for her realism. He contrasted her recognizable, middle-class world with the “land of fiction” found in the improbable novels of Gothicism and sensibility. Unlike the typical novelist of sensibility, a young lady living securely in Twickenham who wrote of caverns and dungeons, of Black Forest robbers and Sicilian smugglers, Jane Austen stuck to the realities of England’s Home Counties. As Scott said, she rejected “those pictures of romantic affection and sensibility, which were formerly as certain attributes of fictitious characters as they are of rare occurrence among those who actually live and die,” preferring to give the reader “a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place around him.”

This is true in so far as it goes, but it is only half the truth. At her deepest reaches Jane Austen never gave up her allegiance to the romance, that form for wish-fulfillment, and all of her novels are variants upon the basic romantic archetype of the 18th-century female reading public: the Cinderella story. Whether that story is presented directly, as in *Pride and Prejudice*, or subtly inverted, as in *Mansfield Park*, it is always present. What this means is that Jane Austen satisfies our penchant for realism without excluding the solace of the daydream. The number of readers who have secretly identified with Elizabeth or Darcy, Captain Wentworth or Anne Elliot, must be uncountable. Only the other day a very distinguished critic wrote me that she was going through a crisis of identity, having discovered that she was no longer Elizabeth Bennet but rather Anne Elliot. Yet unlike the feverish daydreams of the Gothic and sentimental novels, which Dr Johnson found so morbid, Jane Austen uses fantasy in the service of that which is normal and healthy. By never losing sight of what is probable and realistic, she domesticates the daydream and avoids what Dr Johnson called the “hunger of imagination that feeds upon life.”

And nowhere is that achievement more evident than in *Pride and Prejudice*. *Pride and Prejudice* has, I think, always been the most popular of Jane Austen’s novels exactly because it strikes a perfect balance between realism and romance. The social world of Elizabeth and Darcy is rendered with scrupulous detail, its limitations and protocols are honestly confronted; yet the hero and the heroine are allowed to achieve freedom and self-expression within these limitations. The reader whose mind has been conditioned by the modern novel may find more complex moral problems in *Mansfield Park*, greater narrative skill in *Emma*, more mature characterization in *Persuasion*; but he or she will return to *Pride and Prejudice* – just as Jane Austen and her family returned to the novel again and again –

for a tone and style that are uniquely satisfying. Like all great comedies of manners, it affirms the value of that which is "light, and bright, and sparkling" without lapsing into sentimentality.

One proof of the permanent charm of *Pride and Prejudice* lies in the novel's ability to resist its critics and adapters. Even in cribs for students, even in a musical comedy (remember Hermione Gingold), the novel manages to survive. I recently had occasion to read A. A. Milne's 1936 dramatic adaptation, *Miss Elizabeth Bennet*, where the dustjacket claims that Milne has blended Jane Austen's language so skilfully with his own that not even the expert can tell "where the novelist's dialogue ends and his begins." In fact, Milne's dialogue is saturated in its time and place, and his exchanges between Darcy and Elizabeth sound — as Andrew Wright has shrewdly remarked — exactly like conversations between Noël Coward and Gertrude Lawrence. Still, the novel survives this manhandling with much of its charm.

Some of this enduring charm must have to do with the peculiar way in which *Pride and Prejudice* was written. Between the abandonment of *First Impressions* in 1797 and her return to it sometime after 1809, Jane Austen had grown from youth to middle-age, from the expectation of an equal marriage into almost certain spinsterhood. She had witnessed death and family tragedy, and had come to a clear recognition of the social and economic imperatives that direct every life. In the unfinished *The Watsons*, which is in some ways a prelude to *Pride and Prejudice*, she had attempted, at a time of personal distress, to treat this darker vision of society. By the time she returned to *First Impressions* she had known at first hand the terrible pressures which drive Charlotte Lucas into an unequal and humiliating marriage with the grotesque Mr Collins. Even while revising *Pride and Prejudice* in 1811-12 she was at work on the first novel of her middle life, *Mansfield Park*, which seems to question the values of wit and style affirmed by *Pride and Prejudice*. She was both playful and serious when she wrote to Cassandra, a few days after publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, and had this to say:

The work is rather too light, and bright, and sparkling; it wants shade; it wants to be stretched out here and there with a long chapter of sense, if it could be had; if not, of solemn specious nonsense, about something unconnected with the story; an essay on writing, a critique on Walter Scott, or the history of Bounaparté, or anything that would form a contrast, and bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness and epigrammatism of the general style

Pride and Prejudice seems to affirm that Wit and Wisdom are complementary in the accomplished mind; but not long after its

publication Jane Austen could advise a niece that "Wisdom is better than Wit, & in the long run will certainly have the laugh on her side" — a statement which might well stand as the motto for *Mansfield Park*. It seems clear that in *Pride and Prejudice* we have the vitality and optimism of youth — reflected in the "general style" — tempered by the psychological experience of middle-age. The greatness of *Pride and Prejudice* lies in this easy commerce between a youthful spirit and a mature moral vision. One index to the new tones and new attitudes struck in *Pride and Prejudice* is the novel's use of conventions and stock situations drawn from eighteenth-century fiction. It is this transformation of familiar materials which yields one of the novel's chief pleasures, the sense of subtle variations within a fixed and traditional range of experience. *Pride and Prejudice* bears the hallmark of "classic" art, the discovery of new possibilities within a traditional form.

This last remark brings us squarely up against the problem I have already mentioned: how can such a limited world yield great art. Early critics such as Scott praised her for emulating the precise finish of "the Flemish school of painting." In our own day we have tried to justify Jane Austen's greatness by analyzing the "modernity" of her narrative methods, or the liberating effects of her irony, perhaps at the price of ignoring those virtues of "precision", and "finish" which Scott recognized. The important thing to understand in this regard is that the world of Jane Austen's fiction is deliberately more limited than that of her observation. Any reader of the *Letters* or the family papers soon realizes that Jane Austen was familiar with many areas of experience not treated in her novels. She deliberately allowed her materials to be dictated by the manners of the age, which severely limited the subjects of polite conversation between men and women. Like all truly "classical" artists, she welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate her freedom within restrictions, to prove her "exquisite mastery of that which can be mastered." There is a revealing passage in *Persuasion* where Anne Elliot, the most autobiographical of all the heroines, discovers what she already knew, "that a removal from one set of people to another, though at a distance of only three miles, will often include a total change of conversation, opinion, and idea." Her visit to Uppercross, the home of the Musgroves, is a visit to another world:

The Mr. Musgroves had their own game to guard, and to destroy; their own horses, dogs, and newspapers to engage them; and the females were fully occupied in all the other common subjects of house-keeping, neighbours, dress, dancing, and music. She acknowledged it to be very fitting, that every little social commonwealth should dictate its own matters of discourse; and hoped, ere long, to become a not unworthy member of the one she was now

transplanted into. — With the prospect of spending at least two months at Uppercross, it was highly incumbent on her to clothe her imagination, her memory, and all her ideas in as much of Uppercross as possible.

Like Anne Elliot, Jane Austen “acknowledged it to be very fitting, that every little social commonwealth should dictate its own matters of discourse.” She could be a devastating and ironical critic of these limitations, in the manner of Elizabeth Bennet or Emma Woodhouse, but she never yielded to the sentimental desire for escape. Like the poet faced with a difficult and confining verse form, with a sonnet or a sestina, she found delight in demonstrating her mastery of the social forms. Contemporary manners determine the shape of her fictional world, and when her characters are allowed to achieve freedom and satisfy our romantic desires — as with Elizabeth and Darcy — they must work out their salvations within a framework of existing manners.

It strikes me as an American that the rural life of Jane Austen’s England possessed a social complexity and inclusiveness seldom found elsewhere. Another American, the young Washington Irving, surveying the English social scene of 1817 with sympathetic detachment, saw a way of life very different from that of Europe or America.

In some countries the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is a mere gathering-place, or general rendezvous, of the polite classes, where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gayety and dissipation, and, having indulged this kind of carnival, return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom, and the most retired neighborhoods afford specimens of the different ranks.

In other words, the country villages which Jane Austen knew and described were microcosms of English society. They might be cut off from the elegant life of the nobility — part of Darcy’s awesome presence derives from his position as the son of an earl’s daughter, and Lady Catherine descends on Longbourn like a creature from another world — but these villages were representative of the Tory gentry who gave England its unique character. Within these microcosmic societies could be found enough variety in personality, rank, and economic situation to satisfy the most most complicated imagination.

To the casual observer of Jane Austen's lifetime these rural societies must have seemed static and eternal, yet a more discerning eye would have noted disturbing changes. Washington Irving acknowledged this, in his essay on "Rural Life in England," when he deplored the economic forces which were causing the larger estates to absorb the smaller, thus threatening "the sturdy race of small farmers." The demands of the new industrialism and the new spirit of social reform were working profound changes upon the ordered world of Jane Austen's youth, and in *Pride and Prejudice* we witness this confrontation between a traditional social order and the new forces of individual enterprise.

It was during Jane Austen's lifetime that the narrow term *bourgeois*, borrowed from the language of European society, was supplemented by the broader conception of an English "middle class." *Bourgeois* suggests a fixed social quantity, a class of urban tradesmen and entrepreneurs, but the term "middle class" suggests a more fluid dynamic group. In *Pride and Prejudice* the old social order represented by Darcy and Pemberley is directly challenged by the vitality of the middle-class Gardiners, and it is a tribute to Jane Austen's social awareness that she can treat both attitudes with candour and sympathy.

When we look at the characters of *Pride and Prejudice* we find a number of figures drawn from the repertory of eighteenth-century comedy, vestiges of Jane Austen's youthful delight in caricature. The Reverend William Collins, Mary Bennet, and Sir William Lucas are traditional grotesques given new life. Wickham descends from a long and plausible line of fictional seducers, and Lady Catherine is an anachronistic figure who lives for us because her beliefs are themselves anachronistic. But in the other characters Jane Austen is drawing on the realities of a changing society. Although his sisters will not admit it, Bingley lives on a fortune that "had been acquired by trade," while the Gardiners are frank and attractive representatives of a new order. The differences between Gracechurch Street, the city home of the Gardiners, and Rosings Park, the great house of Lady Catherine, are the differences between a dynamic natural aristocracy of talent and a static aristocracy of blood and inherited wealth. It is characteristic of Jane Austen's complex vision that she can see the virtues of both societies. If Darcy is taught by anxiety and humiliation to appreciate the value of the Gardiners, Elizabeth learns through suffering the value of his "proper pride." The easy relationship between Darcy and the Gardiners which culminates the novel is a social counterpart to the personal harmony that Darcy and Elizabeth achieve.

All along I have been talking about *Pride and Prejudice* as a

balance or accommodation of opposites: opposites in Jane Austen's life, in the history of the novel, perhaps in life itself. And of course this balance is the form and meaning of the novel. One of the dominant metaphors in *Pride and Prejudice* is that of the dance in which figures approach and retreat from each other in elaborate patterns, only to be united at last. Presumably it is this pattern of intricate manoeuvres and stratagems leading to a final resolution which makes so many think of Mozart in connection with *Pride and Prejudice*. As Darcy and Elizabeth come to know and love each other they become more alike, sharing each other's values, even talking more alike. The final triumph of the novel is that their marriage is satisfying on all levels of experience, and to all readers. Economically, it confirms that happy progress already seen in the life of the Gardiners. Socially, it brings an aristocracy of tradition into contact with an aristocracy of talent. Aesthetically, we feel that Darcy and Elizabeth are "right" for each other, their styles of living are complementary. All of these accommodations, so long anticipated by the reader and so stubbornly resisted by the proud and prejudiced characters, first come into Elizabeth's view when she approaches Pemberley, Darcy's Derbyshire home. You will remember that Elizabeth, on her vacation trip with the Gardiners, is persuaded almost against her will to tour Darcy's supposedly vacant great house. This is how Jane Austen describes Elizabeth's first sight of Pemberley:

They gradually ascended for half a mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valley, into which the road with some abruptness wound. It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills; — and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt, that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something!

Sir Walter Scott has been much abused for his remark that Elizabeth "does not perceive that she has done a foolish thing until she accidentally visits a very handsome seat and grounds belonging to her admirer"; presumably those who protest against Scott's interpretation of the scene think he places too much emphasis on material things. But of course Scott was right. It is precisely because Elizabeth sees Pemberley as a symbol of social, economic, and personal secur-

ity that her heart is changed. The description of the great house might be a description of Darcy himself: stately, rich, powerful, elegant, but withal pleasant and attractive. Unlike that other character in English fiction whom she most resembles, Henry James's Isabel Archer, Elizabeth has learned the lesson that no human being can be separated from the "envelope of circumstances" in which he or she lives. Remember that Madame Merle tells Isabel early on in *Portrait of a Lady*: "One's self — for other people — is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture, one's garments, the books one reads, the company one keeps — these things are all expressive." Isabel Archer refuses to heed Madame Merle's advice, and the *Portrait* turns towards tragedy. Elizabeth finally acknowledges these things, and *Pride and Prejudice* turns toward comedy. In recognising Pemberley as a symbol of Darcy's true personality, a perfect complement to her own, Elizabeth is making both a social and an aesthetic judgement. She is half-consciously anticipating a marriage that will satisfy both our sense of social rightness and our sense of personal style. Which is but to say that at a particular moment in her life, and within the created universe of *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen managed to reconcile the normally conflicting demands of economics, manners, and aesthetics.

A. Walton Litz



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